

spare Rib

Women's magazine
No.15 1973 20p

How do you cope with
Jealousy

*'I'd like to study some
females myself ho ho'*

*The new women's
studies courses
why are they so
controversial*

Closing the gap
between the way you act
and the way you feel

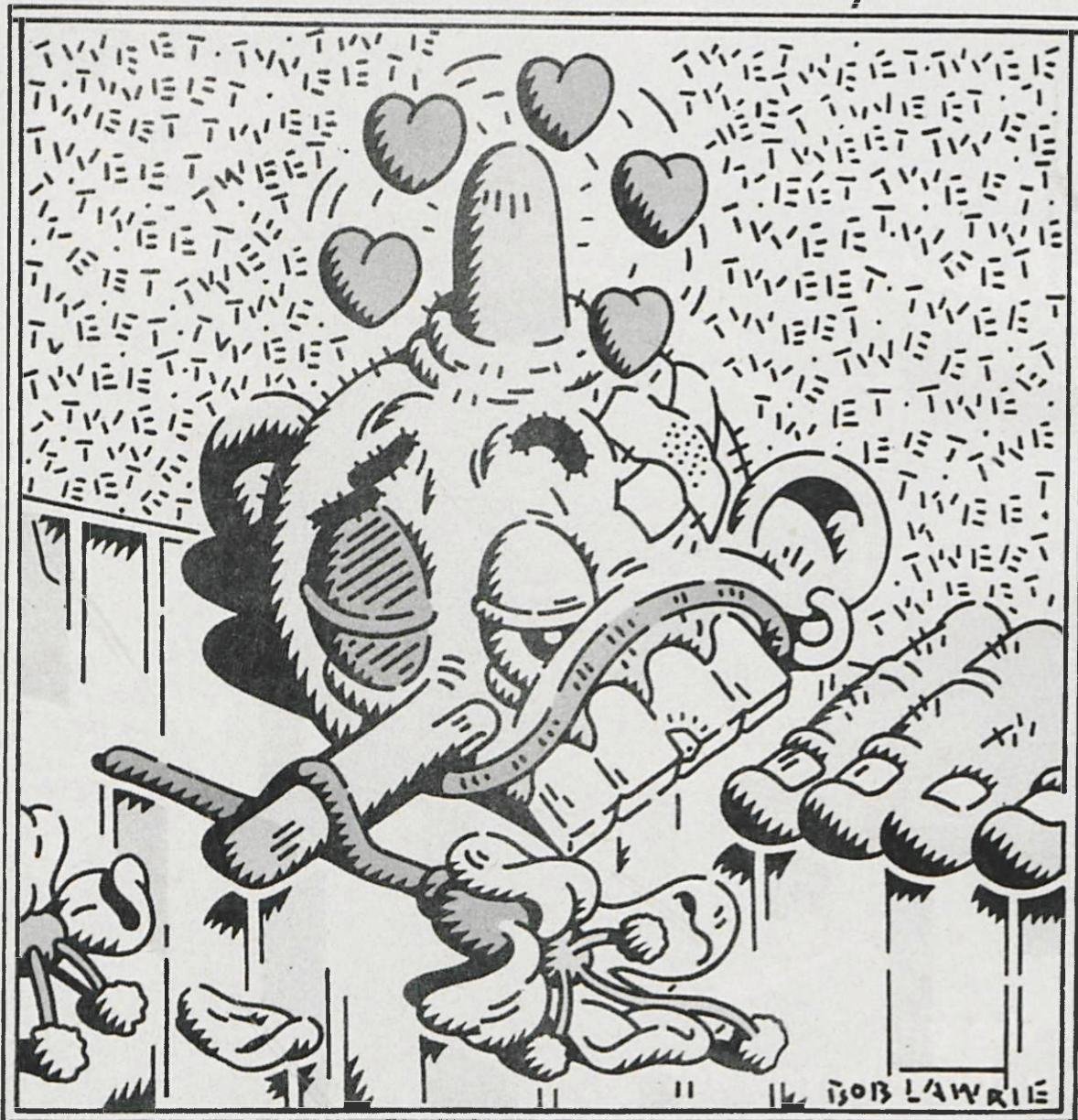
Extra!

Women Killers on the Screen
Prostitution in France

Plus!

Pros and Cons of IUD's
Facts about Maternity Leave
Books, Music, Comic, Law.

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can help you find it.

In our own write

Dear Spare Rib,
At last I've got this month's copy, hooray.
Being a mature student on a pittance of £1.80 a week grant, I can't afford to subscribe so every month I walk a couple of miles in search of a copy. When I've got a little bread stacked up, I will subscribe, but although words aren't the same as money, you are a flame in a billion ashes and I pray you can burn stronger. I need the walk and my mind needs the stimulation and hope offered by Spare Rib.

US

For years now, people have said
Why don't you two get married,
After all it's great to have
A mortgage around your necks.
Get married to a dishwasher
Or even better still a kitchen stove,
They told me.

You know there is nothing nicer
Than having a little woman
Slaving round your feet,
They told him.
And well, when you get her into bed
At night, give her a little treat.
They, were blind to my six foot height
And his wanting to free me and himself.
So we walked away from them
And moved into the future
Aware of the obstacles
We would face, sharing the little we had.
Yet deep within us both
Is something stronger than love
A yearning to know each other
And the world about us much better.
For three years we've been going strong,
Yet I still don't know what a dishwasher
Looks like,
And as for the stove, there isn't a chair
Big enough to keep me there.
For outside our window
Something calls us to come and share
What we have with others
Who are sinking fast
With emotional hang-ups and financial
burdens.
And as for the mortgage,
We will never be able to afford one.
Love and peace,
Gaynor

Dear Spare Rib,

Today I went round all the large newsagents in Reading trying to buy a copy of this month's issue, without success. I was told they don't stock it. In fact, they do stock it because I've bought Spare Rib in several shops in

Reading before now, but somehow I couldn't summon the courage to argue. Looking at some of the sexist rubbish they do stock, however, it makes one very sad to think that newsagents (particularly the women amongst them) are prepared to let us commit intellectual and social suicide by depriving us of one of the most intelligent (if not the only intelligent) women's magazine available.

It is the only magazine that I can sit down and read from cover to cover without getting depressed. It's not that it doesn't contain some depressing articles - it probably does that more than most - but it knows reality from escapism and is not afraid to make the distinction clear. At last women are addressed as people who have a right to know what's going on, people whose opinion matters, people whose aims in life should go beyond feeding and clothing themselves and their families.

What other magazine educates its readers while treating them as equals - to see through the trivialities of appearance and to recognise that they too have a role to play in improving living conditions, encouraging them with news of real events, not filling their bored minds with escapism and trivia?

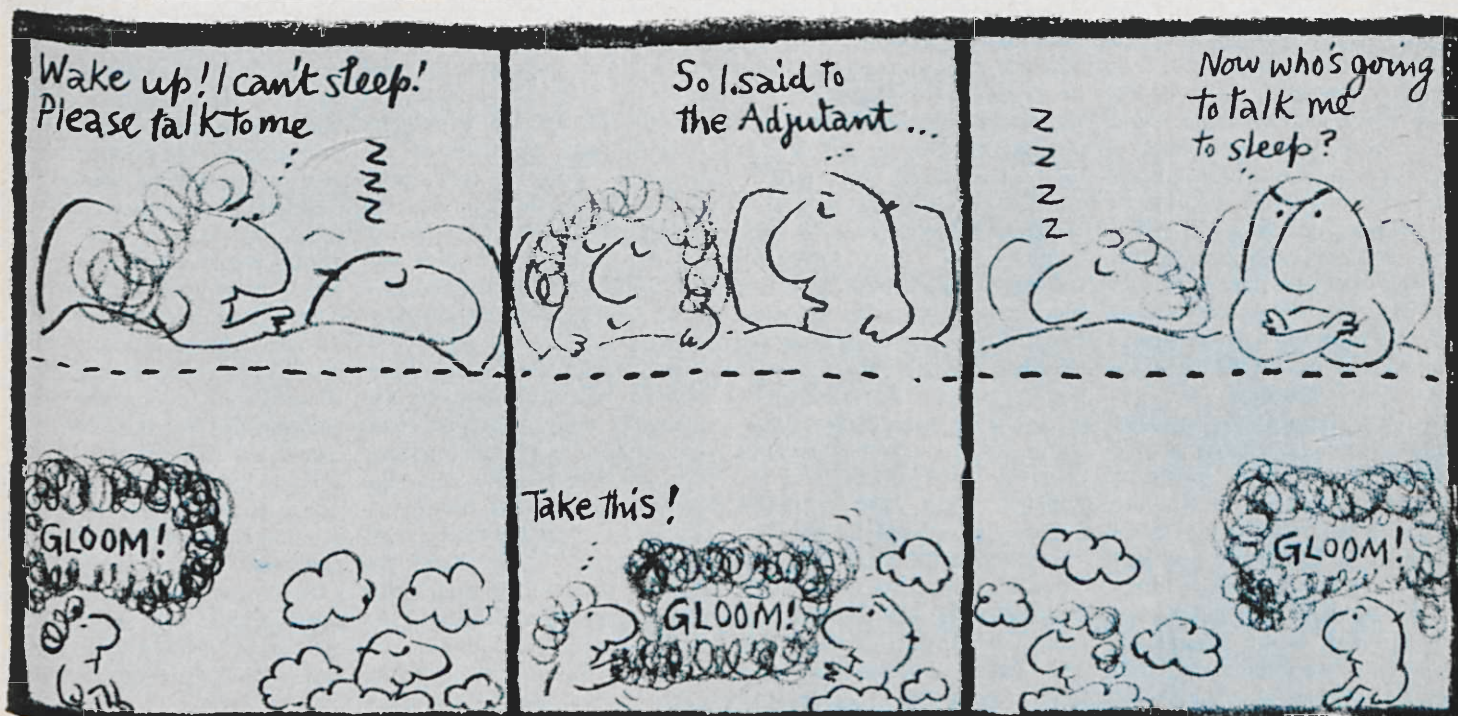
Women need Spare Rib.

Yours sincerely,
Marilyn Giddings,
Wokingham, Berks.

Dear Spare Rib,

I have recently been considering what it is that makes most men hate Women's Lib so much. A great deal has been written about the sexual reasons - Me Tarzan You Jane - but

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The new cosmetic supermarket

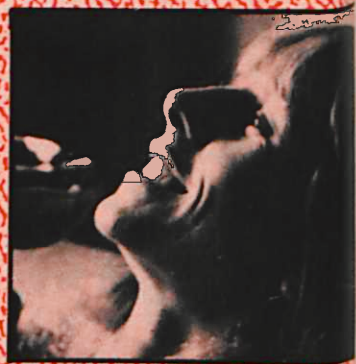
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Name

Address

Please print in BLOCK CAPITALS.

Ellen's Diary



April end, 1970

It seems to have taken me a while to recover from the arrival of Rupert. A few weeks after I left the hospital I went down with German Measles, which, ironically, I must have caught in the post natal ward. So much for hospitals. Anyway, it's all behind me now, and I feel full of health and energy for the first time in ages. One of the things I intend to do is to start going to regular meetings of a new Women's Lib group locally, and this time I would like to get really involved.

June

I have been going to the meetings for a month now. This group seems very different from the last one I went to. The atmosphere is much more relaxed, maybe because some of us know each other quite well. I think there are other reasons for it too. There are about eight of us from very similar backgrounds and we are in similar situations now: mostly in our late twenties, from middle class homes and grammar school and university educated. Most of us have professional husbands and one or two small kids. A couple of the women don't have kids and go out to work, and one of the women who does have kids has a part time job in a primary school. There are only two single women in the group. So, on the whole, we have a lot in common.

We have spent the last few weeks on quite a superficial level talking about a whole number of things: pregnancy, birth, our experiences with doctors and hospitals, kids and the problems of trying to cope with toddlers, husbands, and how much they help, as well as the schools and universities we went to. We have been endlessly skirting round these topics in a rather anecdotal way, recounting individual experiences here and there, and comparing notes, but as yet we haven't attempted any deeper discussion or serious analysis of our common situation as women in society. The chatty, relaxed atmosphere of the discussions has laid the foundations of friendship in the group, and it's been interesting learning about the other women's history, discovering common elements. At the end

of the last meeting we decided to take a single topic and explore it in depth, over a period of months if necessary, until we had completely exhausted it. The subject we decided on was sexuality.

June a week later

All of us turned up for last night's meeting: sexuality was a subject important to all of us and we didn't want to miss out on any of it. Yet at the same time we felt apprehensive and a little embarrassed. This was such a private area, something we never talked about except in a jokey, impersonal manner. I think we were all aware of the problems: being victims of a society which pressurises us to be a sexual success, and which induces women particularly to compete against each other for men. All of which makes it very difficult to talk about our sexuality in a frank open way, where we neither undermine nor threaten each other, or feel ashamed to admit that there might be anything wrong with our own sex lives. But last night, even knowing all this, we still felt reticent and awkward, and it took a while for a discussion to get off the ground. I personally felt - and I think other women shared my feelings - reluctant to give very much away, especially the negative bits. The particular aspect of sexuality scheduled for discussion was orgasms. We started by talking a bit about what our orgasms felt like, how they might be different from men's and we rambled about for a while. Someone mentioned the pamphlet 'The myth of the vaginal orgasm'. Then one woman admitted that she hardly ever had orgasms even though she enjoyed making love. We were impressed by her bravery in saying this, and, from that moment on, lots of problems began to emerge. We discovered areas of common experience in relation to our men: we found that for the most part, it was them rather than us who made the sexual initiatives, that it was us, rather than them, who felt too tired to make love and who took more time to be aroused. We found we all went off sex at times and we weren't the constantly randy beings we liked men to suppose we were. We speculated

at length as to the extent to which each of these problems had biological origins, and the extent to which they arose from social conditioning. The meeting was interesting because for the first time we learnt something about a very private area of each other's lives, yet highly relevant to ourselves as women. We also experienced the cathartic effects of exposing ourselves and in doing so breaking down the barrier of sexual competition in relation to each other which is in itself an essence of women's role.

When I got home later that night David was very keen to know what had been going on. I talked to him a bit about it. I feel it is important because neither women nor men can change unless these things are discussed among them openly, even though at this stage I think it is very important for the small group to remain exclusively women. In this way we can build up a sense of identity and solidarity with one another, as well as encouragement to be more confident and articulate as individuals. Today I'm tired again: it's becoming a regular Wednesday feeling. The meetings disturb me; they make me restless and send my brain into a turmoil, so I never sleep on Tuesday nights.

July

I still spend most of my time with the kids. I'm enjoying the novelty of a boy baby, but conscious of how my attitudes towards him, not just because he is the second child, but also because he is a boy, might be shaping his consciousness - for better or worse. I do look for things that might be specifically male in the conventional sense about him, but he is very different from Katie: much more relaxed. How much that is attributable to the difference in my attitude to him, I can't really say. I don't feel so totally involved in either of them now as I used to feel with Katie: at times I resent them wholeheartedly. At times their insistent presence drives me into a frenzy: it's the feeling of not being able to complete a thought, let alone a sentence to another adult that leaves me seething with frustration. I wonder whether to put them both into a nursery, until I

remember things I'd read years ago about the terrible psychological effects of maternal deprivation on young children. I'd never forgive myself if it happened to them... except that I also wonder why no one has ever written any books about the psychological effects on a couple of small kids and one mother stuck together day after day, gradually driving each other round the bend.

August end

Our discussions on sexuality have been going on for weeks now, and we've covered a wide range of areas. The level of frankness and openness and honesty has increased as the weeks go by, and a sense of personal closeness and understanding has quickly developed. There aren't many problems that I personally could not talk to the group about without feeling their concern and support. David has started to work at home most of the time. He is one of a group of people, men and women, who are preparing for the production of a new radical weekly. One of their aims is women's liberation and, in terms of practice, this is why sexual parity on their editorial board is of crucial importance. That's great, but I wonder how I fit in in relation to it all. I mean, in order that David can preach Women's Liberation and radical politics, it is necessary for me to spend my whole time looking after his children. His answer to that is, of course, that the work he is doing is of great importance to him and to the revolutionary movement, and he is unwilling to sacrifice time over it in helping me out of my situation. To me that seems a grotesque contradiction.

September

David and I are in the middle of another crisis again, the worst yet. I think I may leave him. It started two days ago. I had been looking after the kids and doing the chores, and I was tired and fed up with it all and feeling resentful of the relaxed, creative, fulfilling life David led, tucked away in the seclusion and peace of his study. Just before lunch he went out to get some tobacco, and I went to

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To those of you who thought the cover photo on the July issue of Spare Rib was a man, we express our astonishment. Only goes to make our point about how unusual it is to see photos of women whose character has been allowed to show through in a positive way.

Our first feature raises important questions about the nature of male/female relationships today. Will couples survive? Or does the threat to monogamy have more to do with the disruptive nature of our society. John Miles points out that, when we direct most of our pent-up energy back into our relationships, we ignore the contradictions of trying to be human in a non-human world. If the stress on monogamy comes, in fact, from outside the couple although it is seen as an internal debate, it does not mean the criticisms should be directed solely towards the relationship but at the way the couple is affected by outside pressures.

That obviously applies to the individual as well. If the emphasis is placed on personal solutions, the external problems that lead to confusion will remain and it is all too easy to opt for a spiritual answer, like Sally Kempton who gave up her involvement in feminism to become a teacher in a Sufi mystic school. When radicals like Rennie Davis also follow that pattern, it implies that a totally objective view of society is just as dangerous. Without carrying out the debate between our internal and external contradictions, the results - whether for change in a personal or a practical sense - will always be unsatisfactory.

Cover photograph by Roger Morton

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I refer to the Intellectual and monetary aspects.

I feel sure that it is fear that makes men treat Women's Lib like a bad joke, and that it is for that reason that libbers are referred to as hysterical dames, fanatics, and "women with nothing better to do".

Man (I refer here to the male species of homo sapiens only), has a great urge to be above everything he encounters. Woman is a possible threat to his superiority, so he suppresses her. It being a man-governed planet, his task is almost too easy. By only allowing her a proper education (that is one on a par with her male counterpart) in the last century or so, he made sure that she had no opportunity to realise that she was being conned. If any female freak did begin to question the system, she was quickly certified and put away.

Man's biggest mistake was introducing compulsory education, for now women realise what has been happening to them for so long. Man is terrified of an intellectual equal so it is made harder for women to get to university (especially medical schools). He is scared he might lose his superiority through giving women financial equality so he makes her wages so impossibly low that she can barely support herself.

But Women's Liberation is here to stay and Man is beginning to realise it. His cries against us are now plaintive and rather pathetic. Now we hear: 'Why do you have to be so aggressive?' 'It's so much nicer when you're feminine, what's wrong with your position anyway?' This is Man's last, desperate gambit. But in an attempt to appeal to feminine sympathy he has weakened himself irrevocably.

Unfortunately for him, his ego trip is over and he is going to wake up to the unpleasant realisation that there is something else on this planet besides him and his pollution.

There is woman.

Peace,
Vicky Jones,
Cobham,
Surrey.

Dear Spare Rib,

Radio London were reporting that a July issue might not appear, so I was extra pleased to grab this one. Men thrive on it too, extra knowledge without having to ask direct for it I suspect. One I know takes at least three days to read it and then keeps it under his bed for the rest of the month.

I was pretty upset to see it go up to 20p, although it seems to have improved on it. Re: Is Your GP Sympathetic. I would say is he competent? I have had trouble in my knees for two years and from eight doctors I have as yet to have the same diagnosis twice.

All of them love pain-killers which I needn't tell you don't heal anything. But when I asked about acupuncture I'm laughed at. Next visit I shall be asking for vitamin B6 tablets. Love and kisses and keep going,
Annie Mortimer,
Oxford Road,
Chiswick

Dear Spare Rib,

How long must we wait before something is done about married women's grants? I am taking a degree course at university and, because I married before I was twenty-one, my

grant is based on my widowed mother's income. She is expected to pay me £40 p.a., and since she cannot afford this (nor indeed would I allow her to contribute this amount), I receive only £235 p.a. In addition, I do not receive travelling expenses to cover one return journey home per term. Since I mistakenly thought I was entitled to these expenses I applied for and received them, and now I am faced with a debt of over £40 as I have to pay them back. Let us have more active action to ensure equal grants for married men and women.

Yours faithfully,
Gillian Mclean,
Whitley Bay,
Northumberland.

Dear Spare Rib,

Just a note to congratulate you on a superb July edition. I literally read every word from cover to cover. The content and style are bang on - intelligent, provocative and practical. Keep up the good work,
Christina Salt,
Manchester.

Dear Sisters,

I like Spare Rib a lot, the variety of articles, find book reviews of special interest, Spare Parts very useful, a very informative magazine for anyone concerned with questions of equality. I've heard some criticisms from more radical sisters, chiefly on grounds that Spare Rib relies too much on traditional magazine format - not justified in my opinion since your approach is very different from the general run of commercial women's magazines. I think that the task of presenting the material you do to the unconverted and even the non-extreme radical sections of the movement is very difficult. I think you make a very good job of it and Spare Rib has far more appeal for me in its format than, say, the underground press.

Good luck,
love,
Louise Eaton,
Didcot, Berks.

Dear Spare Rib,

I write with reference to the exhibition of feminist art at Swiss Cottage, reviewed in the June issue, and the question it raised - Is God a Woman?

I think not. God must surely be male for only a man would create woman to endure menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and weaning, and all the associated emotional and physical disruptions, thus rendering her slave to her body.

A She-God would have distributed the burdens of reproduction a little more evenly.

Yours sincerely,
Vanessa Cecil,
Chinbrook Road,
London SE12

Dear Spare Rib,

I find the types of advertisement that read 'The message is clear, men are men and women are women and never the twain shall meet' really annoying and, in a way, laughable. I live with a very gentle man who is thin, smaller than me, loves cooking and is into sewing and music. It occurred to me that the prejudice he encounters for being himself and the prejudice I come up against are one and the same. We have been together for a

year and he has learned to cry without feeling ashamed, and I have learned to feel without the usual 'one-upmanship' other relationships have carried with them.

The liberating process has been mutual, we are now friends, lovers and dress and think alike. Because we are alike. There are no differences other than minor physical ones. Anyway, as I could talk for hours about what you already know and no doubt agree with, I'll say many thanks for your excellent magazine.

Jane Higgins,
Salford 6,
Lancs.

Dear Spare Rib,

I am a qualified midwife, and three months ago I had a baby myself (at home). I thought I was well prepared, but got a shock at the vast number of sanitary towels I used, and the price of them. Thank you for telling me about the price, but too late for me to have stocked up, and anyway, I did not know I was going to use the best part of 200 pads! Before anyone (eg, Anthony Barber) says that I saved on sanitary protection by being pregnant, I must say that suitable extra clothes cost far more.

May I also protest about the VAT on behalf of the thousands of women who have menorrhagia (heavy periods), and those who have short cycles and so more than the normal thirteen periods a year. I am getting petition forms about it from the National Consumer Protection Council, who are concerned.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Horsler,
London SE5

Dear Spare Rib,

Obvious comments on Adweek story of women's mags of 29.6.73.

Candida women's magazine was launched by IPC to fill a researched gap in the market and it flopped. It flopped despite the gap in the market, and despite Candida being not much more contemptible than the successful Cosmopolitan. The cheap and grotty look and feel of the mag was not the glossy dream package that so many women desire after puberty. It didn't draw the readership and the advertising.

Two new women's mags are coming out this autumn. Naïve EVE is aimed at working class women outside the fleshpots of London, aged 18-24. Sophisticated VIVA is aimed at the Cosmopolitan market of middle lower middle class women aged 18-34. EVE is pitched at a hole in the market, VIVA at the market in general. The key point is that they are both heading for a booming market. Cosmopolitan has an astonishing 350,000 readers after 12 months. It pulls advertising like raw meat attracts flies. The Sunday Times property columnist in his private pursuit Property News wrote: "Now is the time to make a killing out of bedsits." Now is also the time to make a killing out of women's mags.

By the time ideas of women's liberation have filtered through the thick mesh of say Cosmopolitan editors and advertisers, they are totally emasculated. Thus with all radical ideas and feelings. Women's liberation is diluted and debased into a fleeting young woman's independence and spending power. No hope there. Spare Rib must go on.

Julius Haast,
London, W.11



Jealousy

*For how long will most relationships be in couples?
In his struggle to change himself and the structure of his relationship,
John Miles tried not to gloss over the problems of being in a couple.
Here he gives an analysis of jealousy, going beyond his experience
into the kinds of expectations we have
of sex, family, dependency, possessiveness.*

I'm lying in bed on my own. My wife is sleeping with another man. I am imagining, with painful realism, what they are doing together. I find it hard to get to sleep . . .

This is happening with my agreement. For the past year or so my wife and I have discussed 'unfaithfulness'. We agreed that no matter how good our relationship was, it was absurd to believe that all our emotional and sexual needs could be met exclusively by each other for our entire lives. Parts of us were not finding expression. Living together in the same house, bringing up the kids, constantly submerged in the daily paraphernalia of family life - all these things built up resentments, petty hostilities, routine, boredom, dependence, as fast as they solidified our relationship and understanding of each other, as fast as they strengthened certain

underlying bonds between us. So we agreed that if one or the other of us developed a relationship with someone else it might be good not only for us personally, but also, in the long run, for our future together.

We also agreed that it was more important that it should happen to Sally, my wife, rather than to me (in the first instance, at least). When we got married (eight years ago) our relationship had followed the usual pattern. Her life became totally involved in the kids and the mind-deadening demands of domestic trivia - while I carried on as before. I became rather disappointed in her. She had seemed such an interesting and passionate girl when I married her, and now she didn't seem to bother about life. When my friends came round (I assumed without thinking about it that my friends

would also be hers, and didn't notice that she didn't really have any friends of her own) it was sometimes as if she wasn't there at all. And when it came to going to bed, as often as not she was too tired to do anything at all. If she did, it was usually without her heart being in it, as if the notion of making our sex-life into a creative one was no longer important to her. We argued about this. I accused her of not being interested in my needs. She said that when I started treating her like a lover, she might respond like one.

So I fantasised about the girls in the sexy magazines, and lusted after the girls I met at parties or stared at in the street, and on a couple of occasions had one-night encounters with other women. When I told her about them (because our relationship was still the kind where we didn't hide such things from each other) she was bitterly resentful. 'Why don't you do the same?' I asked. She replied that she had neither the opportunity nor the confidence nor the inclination to do so.

Then she joined women's liberation and started fighting back. Politics suddenly entered our home, and our life became a daily, sometimes frenzied battle. I was always a bit late in understanding it all. Sure, the idea of women's equality was right, but this wasn't what we were arguing about. She was being hysterical, she was finding excuses for her inadequacies, she was more interested in stopping me from enjoying my life than in starting to enjoy hers.

But gradually, it began to get through. I took a part-time job so that she could also work, and we could share the upbringing of the children and other domestic duties. I found I didn't mind it too much after all. What's more, I realised that Sally's independence, so far at least, was the opposite of being a threat to me. She began to come alive again, she became stimulating to live with instead of merely a frustrated appendage of me. Our understanding of ourselves and each other developed. We reached the point where we felt that if either of us 'took a lover', it would not be such a catastrophe after all. We felt that our relationship was strong enough to adapt to such a situation, and even possibly come out of it better. But if we did not want to repeat the previous pattern of our relationship, it would have to be her first.

*Naive sucker that I am,
I never expected this pain*

Then, a couple of months ago, she met Chris, and they've been sleeping together several times a week ever since, and it's a passionate experience for both of them - as passionate as it was with me and Sally at the beginning.

And, of course, I'm jealous. Naive sucker that I am, I never expected this pain. I never expected this unceasing ache and emptiness, these explosions into almost delirious anguish. I never expected I would feel so crushed, so left out, so insecure, so inadequate, so lonely, so *paranoid*.

But why? Is it really such a naive question? What is this emotion that means the more somebody I love is happy, the more miserable I feel? She is more confident, more fulfilled, more *herself* than I ever remember - and I hate it. Why?

Partly, and most obviously, her present gain is my present loss. Nearly all her sexual and emotional energy is going out to Chris, not me - including a helluva lot of sexual and emotional energy that's become bottled up over the years and not had any expression at all. This is, to say the least, hard to take, the more so because it has meant our sex-life has pretty-well come to a full-stop. On Sally's side this is because she is still too involved in the newness of her relationship with Chris, to be able to parcel out her emotions as she would like. But she doesn't believe this will last, and in my moments of optimism I believe her. Already, in many ways, our relationship has improved rather than deteriorated. The petty resentments and hostilities have virtually disappeared, we are talking about many things that we have been unable to discuss before, parts of us that have been suppressed are coming out into the open again. Suddenly - and probably rather artificially - I love her and appreciate her as acutely as I've ever done - perhaps more than I've ever done. (I'm aware that this is partly connected with her new scarcity-value.) And she says she loves me too, that she feels

absolute confidence in the strength and validity of our relationship, that in the long run it can only be for the best.



Yet I'm bitterly unhappy. She comes home in the morning, kisses me, puts her arms round me. It seems fine, the warmth is perfectly genuine, I am only too pleased to be kissed and reassured by her. But underneath, we feel self-conscious, we aren't quite gelling, there's a gap. Then Chris comes round too, and the three of us do the kids, or eat a meal together, or go to the pub. Again, it seems fine. We all get on together, we laugh and talk, there seems no problem. But underneath I am in turmoil. I am silently screaming that I can't cope, that I can't take it, that any minute I'll crack up completely. And underneath their facades, Chris and Sally have problematic feelings too.

Sally knows how I feel, and it just makes things worse. She's well aware of the desperation of my need for her, she's fully conscious of my desire for her and my insecurity and misery. Yet the very strength of these emotions pushes her away from me. It feels like an invasion of her personality to her. She wants space, she wants to get away, she wants to cut herself off and obliterate herself from the demands I am making on her. She still loves me, otherwise in one sense there would be less of a problem for her. But our relationship has become rather unnatural. So when we get into bed we are unable to make love. She feels self-conscious about it, and I do too.

Sometimes it feels like we're locked in a vicious circle. The more I need her, the less she is able to come to me. And the less she is able to come to me, the more I need her. Part of what it comes down to is that for the time being our priorities concerning our relationship are different. Because of the fulfillment she is getting from her relationship with Chris, the reconstruction of her relationship with me is not felt by her as particularly urgent. The main thing, from her point of view, is simply that we should feel relaxed together, that I should stop being so tense and worried. In the long term she would like more than this, she would like some sort of vibration to come back into our relationship. But there's no hurry, there's no immediate need for this to happen. Whereas for me there appears to be every hurry in the world, because that kind of vibration is going on all round me, but I'm not part of it, and at the precise moment when I particularly need it, or at least need to feel that it's a real future possibility, it isn't forthcoming. So I constantly have to content myself with what feel like small gains, small signs - love at a low ebb.

For the fact is that what I feel a need for can't be forthcoming, because although it is entirely possible for Sally (and most other people too, I think) to love two people at once, it is not possible to love them both at the same level of intensity and in the same way. We are, after all, different people, and it must take time for those differences to become delineated so that each relationship can follow its own course on its own terms. I have to face the fact - and it is a shock to realise it - that this process may take a very long time indeed.



I also have to face the fact that my relationship with Sally will never be the same again - certainly not if she continues to see Chris, and probably not even if she breaks with him. In a very crucial way she has established her independence from me, her

right to her own separate existence. And while I can accept this rationally, the practical business of adjusting to it is acutely difficult. It is difficult for her to make the emotional switches from Chris to me and back - and at the same time to preserve her own sense of herself as a person with space to breathe in. And it is difficult for me to adjust to the fact that part of the time she is emotionally engaged elsewhere from me. Our relationship no longer has the same cosiness. I am continually forced to confront her and meet her as a separate person with a separate emotional existence.

All of these problems are natural, they are what you might expect. Many of them may disappear with time, while others may cease to be regarded as problems, and may instead be regarded as the definitions of a new kind of relationship - one which, like monogamy, has its difficulties, but which is equally (and maybe more) valid. One of the hardest things in this situation is to work out exactly where the problems really stem from. Which of them are due to my personality, which are due to Sally's, which are due to Chris's? Which of them stem from the fact that Sally and I live in a house with our children, while Chris has recently broken up with his family, and is currently without a base of any kind? And which of the difficulties stem from the basic relationship-structures of our Western society? Because the more I think about it, the more I'm convinced that there are other factors involved - that my jealousy is not simply that of a rejected husband but has to do with many other things besides.

*Virility has
nothing to do with it*

One of these things is the difference between the attitudes of men and women to sex. When women are jealous it seems to me that they generally react by going cold on their partners. Men, on the other hand, are likely to respond with vastly increased ardour, with a desperate need for sexual reassurance, to know that they too are virile and desirable and 'good' at fucking - that they are as 'good' as the other man, or, more usually, better. This may be particularly true at the moment in a society which has placed such a high and artificial emphasis on sex as a form of expertise rather than a form of communication. But male sexuality has always been defined in terms of virility and power, whereas female sexuality has been defined in terms of the ability to respond to the man's initiation. One very big component of my jealousy is this feeling of sexual inadequacy, (Chris must be 'better' in bed than me, otherwise Sally wouldn't prefer making love to him at the moment.) But this feeling, inasmuch as it is the product of an artificial code of masculinity that I have been conditioned into accepting, is inadmissible. I have to fight against it, not only because I can see the falsehood underlying it, but also because it actually gets in the way of a good sexual relationship with Sally.

All sorts of things can get in the way of sex, including psychological hang-ups and external things like the legacy of years of routine, of being tired, or having the kids lying ill with a temperature in another room. And of course there are cases where problems of technique and ignorance do arise, and have to be worked out in their own right. But generally speaking, being 'good' at love-making is not a quality that one either does or does not have. Sex is a form of relating between people, and the very attempt to prove that one is good at it can actually prevent the mutual flow of affection and warmth and enjoyment that real 'good' sex involves. Inasmuch as my sense of sexual adequacy is undermined by Sally's relationship with Chris, the problem is not solved by Sally's sending Chris packing and returning exclusively to me, which is what men usually want in such a situation. My feeling - my hope - is that my sexual confidence will return when I know she wants to make love to me as well as him. In other words, when she has a full and satisfying relationship with both of us, and enjoys being in bed with me as well as him, rather than instead of. (This leaves aside the additional possibility - now open to me - of my also developing a good and fulfilling relationship with another person.)

This is what I hope will happen. In the meantime, I have to fight

against this bastard feeling, this hurt male pride, this sexual competitiveness - this tendency to think of 'good' sex as proof of virility (equals power, equals manhood) rather than proof of compatibility and openness with another human-being. The awkwardness of my sex-life with Sally is the awkwardness of a relationship undergoing redefinition. But we still love each other so there is every chance that we will be able to make love together as well. Virility has nothing to do with it.



(So my head tells me. But it goes very deep down, this male paranoia that I have inherited. So much of my insecurity is that of a male ego shorn of the prop of exclusive rights to a female body. It's a prop that none of us men need, that we're better off without. But it certainly takes time to learn how to hold yourself up straight when it's gone.)

Related to my feeling of sexual insecurity is the more general feeling that because Sally is in love with another man (as well as me) I have in some way 'lost' her. In a sense, of course, this is true. She no longer has exclusive emotional allegiance to me, she also has emotional allegiance to someone else. So I have lost some aspects of intimacy with her, not so much of our emotional life is shared, our plans no longer coincide so much. And, of course, I have physically lost her during the time she is with Chris - though this would equally be true if she was at work, or visiting her parents or friends. It is only my lack of trust in her enduring concern for me that makes me think otherwise.

*Jealousy, after all,
is a kind of fear of freedom*

But beyond these considerations - which are undoubtedly problems, but perhaps not insuperably so - this feeling of loss also seems to be connected with my psychological conditioning. It is tied up with the way I have internalised the values of the nuclear family system and grew up believing in the eternal couple. For this system of monogamy - a deep-rooted emotional dependence and attention focussed on only one person, reinforced a millionfold by living for years with that one person and two children in an isolated little box called a home - inevitably gives rise to possessiveness. If I feel I have 'lost' Sally, then I have lost her, in part at least, as a possession. I do not own her, she does not own me. If we can both adjust to this new situation, and accept it and handle it, then it is something to be celebrated, not lamented. The problem is not actually one of Loss, so much as the difficulty of balancing out autonomy. Her exercise of freedom in seeing Chris interferes with my exercise of freedom in seeing her. Yet I do not actually want to see her all the time, and equally I also exercise my autonomy in going out with my mates, or whatever it may be. So the problem is rather one of balancing the right of autonomy with sensitivity to each other's needs. (Not the least of which is that we both need to be relieved of responsibility for looking after the children from time to time. Fortunately the children are quite happy about the situation so far, but whichever of us spends time away from home lumps the other one with the kids. In case that indicates indifference to the children's needs, perhaps I should add that a positive concern for the children's development is one reason we've embarked on all this. The claustrophobia of the nuclear family affects kids as well as parents. Children need love and security, but not suffocation . . .)

The kind of autonomy I'm talking about is not easy to achieve.

The permissive society is double-edged. While everybody is supposed to go around fucking everybody else on the one hand, they are also supposed to have absolute respect for the sacred institution of marriage on the other. Any threat to the family (as traditionally conceived) is a threat to 'the very fabric of our society', to 'everything that is decent in our lives'. Even without this overwhelming conditioning - which begins almost the day we are born and continues throughout our lives, until every one of us becomes subject to what Wilhelm Reich calls 'compulsive monogamy' - even without this, the very fact of the monogamous family makes any other system of personal relationships almost impossible. If you express yourself emotionally and sexually with only one person year after year after year, if that one person becomes the exclusive repository for all your insecurities and hang-ups and need for re-assurance - then dependence becomes very real indeed, and 'unfaithfulness' of one partner threatens the whole world of the other.

*Yet I also desired
these images of women
that pouted at me
almost wherever I looked*

Jealously, after all, is a kind of fear of freedom. I have not lost Sally's warmth and love, but I can no longer be sure that she will be there all the time, whenever I need her. She is demonstrably freer within our relationship, I am potentially freer - freer of dependence and possessiveness, more self-reliant, more myself living with her on equal independent terms. But this freedom is a frightening thing. Not only does it bring me face-to-face with my ultimate aloneness, my own final separateness as a human-being, it is also a freedom I have not been trained for. All my life, like everyone else, I have been subjected to forces which work against my feeling confidence in my own autonomy - at school, at work, in nearly all social relationships. Other people may not feel exactly the way I do, they may have forms of confidence that I lack. But I think that all, or nearly all, suffer from this problem in one way or another, and that many people in the same situation as me would feel rather like I do - naked, exposed, and afraid of confrontation with myself.

Nobody is ever completely free, nor could they be. People need other people. Dependence is a part of love, a necessary part, just as people are necessarily dependent on each other within society at large. But dependence in love can reach the point where it becomes suffocating.

If the situation I am in has jolted me into re-examining a lot of my unconscious notions about virility, possession and dependence, it has also made me actually aware of some other aspects of current social attitudes to sexuality. We mid-twentieth century men and women live in an over-sexed world. Once upon a time work and society were exalted at the expense of pleasure. Now pleasure itself has become exalted as the carrot which will make us behave and go on working. The market has extended to our bedrooms, to the innermost corners of our personal lives. Women in particular are subject to a massive onslaught of commercialisation of their bodies, with whole industries devoted to providing them with stereotyped images of their sexuality and their worth as people. But for me, too, the manipulation of fantasy is continual as if society will only run smoothly when we are all going round in a state of unrelenting horniness.

I admit that for a long time I had an ambivalent relationship with all this counterfeit sex. I objected to seeing women turned into masturbatory fantasies instead of people, I objected to them being sold as packaged dreams, yet I also desired these images of women that pouted at me almost wherever I looked. At times I compared them with Sally and found her wanting (unbelievable, it seems to me now, but true). I succumbed, in part, to the fantasy that

somewhere over the rainbow there existed the perfect fuck with the perfect, all-sexy, deodorised, pin-up girl.

Now Sally has developed a real relationship with someone else, in which sex takes its part as a form of communication, a tender relation between two human-beings. And suddenly, in the light of full consciousness, I see this dehumanised, fantasy sex that I have half-rejected, half-absorbed all this time as nothing more than the shit it really is. The reality of the permissive society is not sexual liberation in any true sense, but rather the sexual sell and all the distorted values that involves.

But beyond this, sexuality has another role in our society. Just as women are supposed to live up to two contradictory stereotypes - on the one hand, the fashionable, impersonalised sex-object, and on the other the personification of warmth, security and 'natural', 'basic' emotions within the family - so sexuality appears to us in both a public and a private form. On the one hand it is a commercialised goodie appearing indiscriminately on every magazine rack, and on the other hand it is supposed to be the last refuge of our most intimate passions and longings. Sexual love is the new opium of the people. All our longings for warm and tender social relations are displaced into dreams of sexual love (or alternatively, into the welcoming bosom of the family, since it becomes increasingly obvious that the two are not quite the same). Never mind if your work is boring, never mind if all human needs are subordinated to the great aim of commodity-production and consumption, never mind if your imagination and initiative and emotional life have been stultified from birth onwards, never mind if we live in an impersonal world where money and form-filling and order-giving-and-taking are the main ways through which people relate to each other as communal beings - so long as you can dream of ecstatic fucking, so long as you can dream of LOVE (or alternatively LERV), you'll be O.K.

But the trouble is, it doesn't work. Neither sexual love nor the family can bear the weight of the emotional load that is being placed upon them. The family begins to collapse under the strain. Personal neurosis, divorces, wife-swapping and, more positively, communal living, become daily more evident features of our society. And as far as sex goes, either it degenerates into ritualised promiscuity, or alternatively first women - and then, in their wake, men too - start to challenge the old ways of relating. They start to see sexual relations not as an alternative to the wasteland, not as a compensation for all the things that people lack in normal life, but rather as a new way of living that will feed back into social relationships generally and seek to transform them.

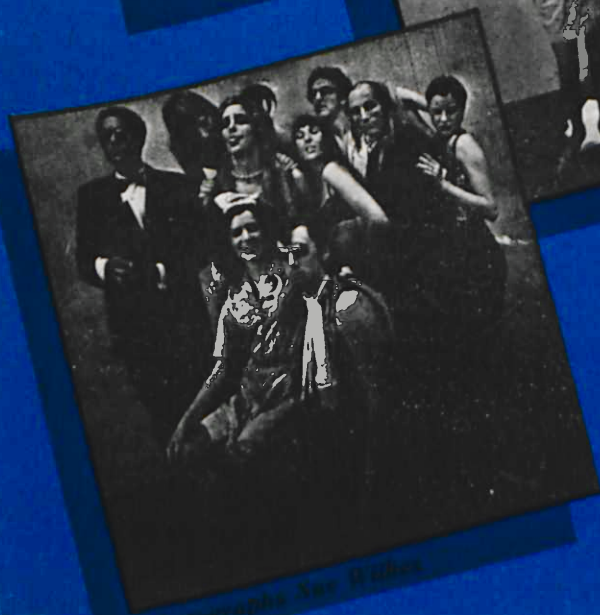
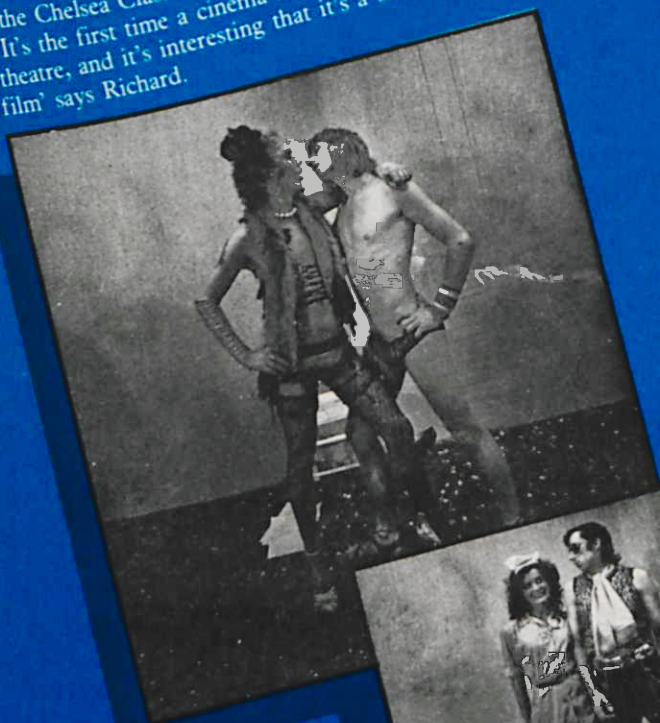
If that's what's been happening to me over the last couple of months - if Sally, Chris and I are moving towards a new and better way of handling personal relationships - then my present jealousy and anguish is a small price to pay. If Sally and I can reconstitute our relationship in a way that makes us both happy, and without infringing on her relationship with Chris - then perhaps we have won a small victory over the forces that distort and fragment our lives. If we can create relationships that are relatively free of dependence, possessiveness and the adman's fantasies - then maybe we have helped in a small way in a fight for humanised relationships in every aspect of ours and other people's lives.

Sally insists that our relationship is strong enough to win through. Sometimes I doubt it; sometimes I believe it, but only in my head; sometimes there are flashes of communication that convince me, yes, she's right. But then I wonder if we - all three of us - are capable of handling the situation as individuals. I wonder how much can be achieved in the area of personal relationships without society itself undergoing a process of transformation. I wonder if one of us (and I suppose I'm the most likely candidate) might simply be unable to cope. I wish I could be sure. I shan't be for a long time, probably. But it's worth the try. In spite of everything, I honestly believe there's no other way. **End**



One Man's Fancy is Another Man's Looks

Richard O'Brien wrote *The Rocky Horror Show*, words and music, to make a theatrical combination of all the things he enjoyed most - science fiction, rock and roll music, horror moves. The result is an explosive show, a farce exposing reality to ridicule, and fantasies to the light. Here we give you some clues to the story, some lines to enjoy, some pictures to look at. After five weeks at the Theatre Upstairs, the show is transferring to the Chelsea Classic, King's Road, London SW1 on August 14th. 'It's the first time a cinema hall has been converted into a live theatre, and it's interesting that it's a show originally inspired by film' says Richard.



Janet: Oh Brad, wasn't it wonderful - didn't Betty look radiantly beautiful - I can't believe it, just an hour ago she was plain Betty Munroe, and now she's Mrs Ralph Hapshatt.
Brad: Yes Janet. Frank's a lucky guy, everyone knows Betty's a wonderful little cook. And Frank himself will be in line for promotion in a year or two.
Janet: Hey Janet, I've got something to say. I really loved the
Brad: Skilful way you beat the other girls to the bride's bouquet.

Frank: Well Brad, Janet what do you think?
Janet: I don't like men with too many muscles.
Frank: I didn't make him for you.
He carries the Charles Atlas seal of approval.
A weakling weighing 98 pounds
Got sand in his face when kicked to the ground
His girl split on him
And soon in the Gym
The sweat from his pores
As he worked for his cause
Made him glisten and gleam
And with massage and steam
He was thin but quite clean
He was in good shape
But the wrong shape
He ate nutritious High-Protein
And swallowed raw eggs
Tried to build up his shoulders
His chest, arms and legs
Then a magazine advert with a new muscle plan said
In just seven days I can make you a man.

Eddie: Whatever happened to Saturday night
When you dressed up sharp and you felt alright
It don't seem the same since cosmic light
Came into my life and I thought I was divine
My head used to swim from the perfume I smelt
I'd taste her baby pink lipstick and that's when I'd melt
Get back in front and put some hair-oil on
Buddy Holly was singing his very last song
With your arm round your girl you'd try to sing along
You felt pretty good cause you'd really had
A good time.

Frank: What ever happened to Fay Wray
That delicate satin draped frame
As it clung to her thigh
How I started to cry
For I wanted to be dressed just the same

Heroin Cure - Family Secret

Heroin and opium addicts can be cured quickly and painlessly with a 200-year-old Chinese remedy. This is the startling claim made by Mr Trinh Hy Quang, of Cholon, China, who maintains he has cured some 100 addicts over the past two years. He uses a secret mixture of fifteen ingredients, according to an international pharmaceutical paper.

Mr Quang inherited the patent on his remedy from his ancestors and refuses to divulge the ingredients. Thirteen of them are extracts of tree bark, one of deer horn and one of tortoiseshell.

The cure is alleged to take only 12 days and to cause no withdrawal symptoms. Mr Quang's charge for inpatients is £50 and for outpatients £20. He claims to have a success rate of 100 per cent, provided patients adhere to the regime.

No Reward for Women Doctors

Yet more evidence of the male bias of the British Medical Association: a move to make pension provisions for women doctors the same as those for men was recently rejected by a large majority at the Representatives' Meeting.

Dr Lena Williams, London made the proposal on the grounds that if a woman doctor died in service, her husband received only a death gratuity and no pension.

Opposing the move, Dr R.D. Rowlands told the women present at the meeting: 'Don't go for "Lib". Don't go for equality. It's not to your advantage.'

It was a ruling of the Inland Revenue that husbands were not 'dependent', he said. But anyway women in the NHS were at no disadvantage because the lump sum their husbands received in the event of death almost invariably represented a better deal than would a pension. This was because husbands were usually older than their wives.

Hot Dog Neurosis

Psychic disturbances in children may be caused by additives in foods, warns an American allergist. Symptoms ranging from simple restlessness to extreme over-activity can result from a diet high in salicylate, which forms the basis of 80 per cent of food additives, Dr Ben Feingold of California told the American Medical Association recently.

Learning difficulties, wilfulness and constant motion among schoolchildren were 'baffling medical authorities', he said.

As soon as children stopped eating foods high in non-essential flavouring and colouring, like highly processed cereals, hot dogs and ice cream, and were placed on special salicylate-free diets, these behaviour disturbances would disappear. But Dr Feingold warned that the additives content of foods was likely to increase in future.

Sterilisation Shock

Married women who apply for abortions under the National Health are being encouraged or even pressurised into agreeing to sterilisation at the same time, according to the Abortion Law Reform Society. In some cases they are refused an abortion unless they consent to be sterilised, particularly in areas like Birmingham and Liverpool, where gynaecologists are reluctant to perform abortions.

In England as a whole, 46 per cent of married women are sterilised when they have an NHS abortion.

Susanna Raby

TIME OFF FOR BABY

What You Need to Know about Maternity Leave

Having a baby doesn't mean you're sick, but that's how most employers look at it. If you have been in the one job long enough to qualify for the full rate - 26 weeks paid sick leave - this must be allowed to you to cover time off before and after childbirth. Anyone with any commonsense can see that this is not 'sick leave' but 'maternity leave' and that it is a basic ingredient of women's working life.

However, the only employers to have realised this are those whose salaries are paid out of public funds, such as your local gas or electricity board, government jobs and teaching. You are more than likely to be at the mercy of employers in the private sector of business, where you might have to rely on unpaid leave, the hope that neither you (nor the baby) will be sick for a year if you've used up your sick leave, the hope you won't be fired, or that it won't break into your payments if you contribute to an occupational pensions scheme.

We print below the recommendations of the Women's Advisory Committee of the TUC which have been taken up by such public employers as the Post Office and the UK Atomic Energy Authority. These 'Best Practice' maternity leave arrangements are guidelines for union negotiation. If you haven't a job in the public sector, find you want a baby but don't want to give up your career or financial independence, you can use this information to make sure your employers understand your rights as a 'female employee'.

For further information, contact the TUC Women's Advisory Council, Congress House, 23-28 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (01-636 4030).

1. Eligibility

The best agreements apply to all women employees, irrespective of marital status and some include part-time employees provided that they are eligible for paid sick leave.

2. Qualifying Period of Service

Normally 12 months' continuous service at the date of application for maternity leave. The best agreements also make provision for some break in service (for example: a period of less than three months between the termination and resumption of employment is not regarded as a break in service).

3. Application for Maternity Leave

Normally application must be made not less than three months before the anticipated date of confinement. Some agreements require a declaration at the time of application that the woman intends to resume employment at the expiry of the leave.

4. Length of Maternity Leave

The "best practice" is 18 weeks (but see paragraph 5 below). The period before and after the anticipated date of confinement varies but the best is 11 weeks before and seven weeks after. If the child does not live the period after confinement is sometimes reduced to four weeks. Leave in excess of 18 weeks may be granted in exceptional cases. Further, absence due to, or attributable to, the pregnancy which occurs outside the period of 18 weeks is usually treated as absence on sick leave within the provisions of the sick pay scheme.

5. Scale of Payment

The outstanding example is undoubtedly one nationalised industry which incorporates maternity leave into the normal sick pay scheme (13 weeks fully pay less NI benefit: and 13 weeks half pay without NI deduction). Generally speaking, however, "best practice" is four weeks full pay less NI benefit (irrespective of whether or not the woman herself contributes to National Insurance) plus 14 weeks half pay without NI deduction - unless the combined total of half pay plus benefit is more than the normal full pay (in which case payment is that sufficient to bring NI benefit up to full pay).

6. Relation to Sick Pay Scheme

Pregnancy is not considered, medically, to be sickness but a number of schemes do incorporate maternity leave payments within the undertaking's sick pay scheme. "Best practice" is that the period of maternity leave is not taken into account for the purpose of calculating sick pay entitlement.

7. Resumption of work

Most agreements include certain restrictions designed to ensure that the woman will resume employment for a specified minimum period after maternity leave.

"Best practice" is considered to be the withholding of payment for the last four weeks of maternity leave until the woman has been back at work for a minimum period of four weeks. One agreement provides that this payment will not be withheld if the child does not live. Another agreement which withholds payment until the completion of three months' service enables the woman, however, to resume initially on a part-time basis, provided that this is at least half the hours normally worked each week before the pregnancy. No agreement provides for appeal against the withholding of payment of the last weeks of maternity leave if work is not resumed. It is considered that, while it is reasonable to include some restrictions of this nature in the agreement, there should be provision for appeal and that each case should be considered jointly by the appropriate trade union and the management.

8. Protection of Health

Only one agreement examined included any protection for the health of the pregnant woman (relating to contact with german measles). Restrictions to protect the woman's health should be kept to the minimum and will vary, according to the industry and the requirements of the particular job. Therefore unions can themselves best judge what protection is desirable for their women members. However, one issue which should be included in all agreements is that pregnant women should be granted leave, without loss of pay, to attend ante-natal clinics.



Anna Raeburn

answers readers' letters...

I wonder if I could have your advice.

I am twenty years old and am doing a course in theatre arts. However at the moment my emotional problems are so great that it looks as though I may have to leave unless I can get them sorted out.

My main problem is that I have had to accept that, although I went out with boys throughout my adolescence, I am lesbian. I have felt attracted to women since I was eleven and have had a series of intense attachments, though these were on the emotional level only and one-sided. All my sexual encounters with men have filled me with revulsion and I feel that I cannot go on without some kind of sexual contact, as long as it is not with a man. I am very ignorant about sex as a subject.

The main thing that comes through your letter is that you are frightened. You don't give any details of your encounters with men but if, as I suspect, you have had a very sheltered upbringing where the sexual realities have been concealed in euphemisms and pink chiffon, then going to college and having to deal with the ineptitudes of a whole lot of people as unsure of themselves as you must have made matters more difficult. It may sound very tough but suppose you are lesbian - so what? The homophile organisations in this country are among the best organised of the minority groups. I think you should contact the Campaign for Homosexual Equality at 28 Kennedy Street, Manchester 4 who have groups of gay men and women in most towns in the British Isles. Gay Lib runs all sorts of groups, so does the Women's Liberation Movement. One of the most complete listings of this sort of information is to be found in Time Out on the Agitprop page under the heading of Help. Why don't you try and meet some gay women and discuss your feelings and allow yourself to be put in a situation where you may make a fulfilling friendship? Gay people are supportive and can throw a lot of light on your confused feelings. Don't tie labels on yourself, just get out and find out and enjoy, enjoy!

I am a divorcee of twenty five who is about to remarry but I'm very unhappy about our sex life and I seem to have psychological problems with men in general. When my husband-to-be's friends come to visit, I cannot bring myself to speak and it is as if my spine is burning and all the muscles around my mouth tighten. I can hardly speak and if I do, it's nonsense.

The underlying question in your letter is - what's wrong with me? Am I going mad? The smart answer is no. You don't give any details of your previous marriage, why you divorced or why you decided to marry the second man. Nor do you say why you're unhappy with your sex life with your husband-to-be. But the things you describe are perfectly ordinary anxiety reactions to a situation you find threatening. Why shouldn't you find it threatening? You committed yourself to a man and with whatever difficulties on both sides, it didn't work out. But marriage is supposed to work out and I think you're suffering from what I privately call divorcee's dilemma (it applies to men too). The reasoning behind it goes something like this: it should work, it didn't, why didn't it work, it must be my fault, I've failed, I must try again, I'm scared - freeze. Some people freeze one way and some another. Your back gets stiff, I bet your neck does too and you get headaches. I think you should perhaps not rush into this second marriage. Delay it for a bit and go and see your doctor. Some mild tranquilisers or anti-depressants would help you along. Devote some thought to yourself and try and figure what you're getting into all over again and why. You're not a fool or an idiot, you're a sensitive human being whose body is giving her if not a red light at least an amber one. Try to take it easy and don't let anybody pressure you. If you'd like to write more fully about the sexual problems, you could write again but basically, they are probably only an extension of the confusion in your mind.

Letter from a reader...

Dear Spare Rib,

I was so struck by the letters on Anna Raeburn's page that I thought I would write and tell you of my own experiences in the hope that they might encourage readers with similar problems.

The problem was that I wasn't having orgasms, and duly worried by society's opinion that you aren't a Woman unless you do, I eventually decided to do something about it. I knew and lived with my husband for two years before we married, and we have now been married for two and a half years. I was unable to admit the problem even to myself until we had been married about six months, after I had talked about it to Mike (husband) we decided I should ask my doctor at the F.P.A. for help as we knew they sometimes did. I asked her advice the next time I saw her but unfortunately she was of the 'many-women-never-do' brigade, which is all very well, but when I had got to the stage of worrying about it I really did want to find out if I could or not. So we managed to forget about it for another six months and I continued to enjoy making love without getting any real sensual pleasure out of it. When it next began to get me down I again brought myself to mention it to Mike, which I really did find hard, even though we have an exceptionally close and affectionate relationship. Depressed by one rejection we decided to do nothing, and left it for a year. Interestingly I always had spells of depression about it at Christmas and midsummer.

Finally, this last Christmas, I had had enough — or rather hadn't had any at all! What really worried me was that I was losing all interest in sex, we were only making love about once a fortnight, and I was beginning to be turned off by all the things that might reasonably be expected to give me an orgasm. I was increasingly ticklish all over, couldn't face oral sex and did not like to be touched round the vaginal area at all. Of course this got Mike down as much as it did me. He felt guilty every time he wanted sex when I didn't, I felt guilty then too and I found myself worrying, quite unreasonably, that he would want to find someone who did enjoy it.

I work in a welfare office and we have a lot of literature around that was helpful, so I tried to find a place where I was sure not to be rebuffed. I came up with the Tavistock Clinic and telephoned them. They said I would have to be referred by my doctor which was a problem, so, like a coward, I sent Mike along to him to get a note. Mike simply told him what we wanted him to do, not awfully tactful, but it worked — he was probably glad we knew what we wanted.

The Tavistock sent a form asking about ordinary personal data, children (none incidentally), previous marriages, and asking us to state the problem as we each saw it. I found it very hard to write down, I'm not so squeamish now, but we were determined by this point and managed. We were then summoned to a preliminary interview which I went to in a panic, having had a good wash just in case we were expected to demonstrate! We had no idea what to expect.

In fact we had a very unharrowing interview with two psychiatrists, one tweedy lady and a fearfully Freudian American. We talked a lot about my relationship with my father, and our 'competitive' attitude to life — was I aiming for an unattainable colour-supp. goal? It all seemed a bit irrelevant. Anyway, after a week we were told we were accepted for a course of treatment and would be told as soon as a place became available. At this point we began to feel guilty about using Tavistock time and not being child rapists or something dramatic like that, a problem we never resolved.

The time came, at the beginning of March, and despite the fact I had decided not to go on with it as I couldn't see how it would work, and I was still scared stiff, we went. We were taken by a different psychiatrist, and went for a total of 15 sessions.

I won't go into the details of all we talked about, as it is obviously too personal to be relevant to any one else, and it was anyway pretty obvious — attitudes to parents — messages received about sex — early experiences. The most useful thing about all the talk was the way it forced us to articulate, and for the first time face, really obvious things about ourselves. For example, I am inclined to quite dramatic, uncontrollable outbursts of temper, 'Aren't these like orgasms', he says; well, it's obviously a bit crude, but it made me think. It also isolated the ground on which we quarrel — highly illuminating!

After the first session he suggested we stopped having intercourse, but just kissed and cuddled. This was a relief to me, but not as dramatic as I expected it to be, as it really did involve admitting to myself that I had a problem at last. There was an interesting irony here, as we went abroad for a holiday during March, and I was feeling so guilty about depriving Mike of his conjugal rights I suggested we should make love. By this time our psychiatrist had suggested we explored ways of touching each other, still without actual intercourse, and I discovered that, of course, this was now the demanding situation. The stress was all transferred to the exploring sessions.

The psychiatrist had asked several leading questions about masturbation and vibrators. I had in fact never masturbated at all — I had experimented at school and found it very dull and never tried again. At that stage I couldn't mention vibrators without going scarlet in the face and giggling, but Mike was keen to try so, cowardly to the last, I made him buy it, while I stood in the corner of the shop by the warty dildoes and pretended I wasn't with him. When I tried the thing I was simply amazed by the range of response it produced, I just hadn't realised what sexual arousal was. This was another point at which I got scared. So far Mike had never made me feel like this. What if he never did and I got addicted to the thing? We were however having some success with the exploring exercises, and I was mercifully losing the ticklishness. The great thing about these highly self-conscious sessions was that we got used to telling each other what to do. It is so hard to say to your lover what turns you on, even when you are as close as we are, but it is a lesson well worth learning. Even if he's doing the right thing I find it still hard to say, 'More gently', it sounds such a reproach, but we both know we can now.

The last exercise was for us to start intercourse with my kneeling on top, but with

Mike preventing his own orgasm while I experimented with positions and caresses. We never had much success with that one, I still felt guilty about Mike not getting an orgasm and we ended up making love normally after a very short period each time.

In fact, we found all the exercises hard to keep on with, they needed to be planned so well (Mike's brother lives with us, so we had to be careful about him) and we often felt we weren't getting anywhere. Or that is how we rationalised it, I still don't know why we did not try harder.

We had some pretty stormy sessions with the psychiatrist, some of them talking about things I found acutely painful, for example lesbian fantasies, a past boyfriend who I slowly realised I was turning into an ideal lover in fantasy — I kept 'seeing' him on the tube for a time, even though I knew he was in New York. We also got very frustrated from time to time, when we felt we were making little physical progress, and spending a lot of time in the sessions talking about how Mike's mother had told him his baby brother had died, for instance. We launched furious attacks on the psychiatrist about the relevance of the discussions, and about his refusal to answer a direct question. However, the discussions were too fascinating on an intellectual level to stop going — in fact that was another problem, Mike can't resist intellectualising about everything and our psychiatrist kept asking for his 'gut-reaction' to things — a more or less unknown concept to him, I have a feeling.

We finished the sessions in the middle of May and looking back now I can see what a fantastic difference it has made. My worry when we stopped going was that, without the catalyst of the psychiatrist, we would be unable to have the soul-baring discussions, and things would stop improving, but far from it. I am not sure if I will ever be able to say that I do or do not have an orgasm, it's a pretty emotionally loaded idea for me, but making love now is just tremendous, so exciting and reinforcing and each time I feel I have made progress.

This isn't meant to be a do it yourself orgasm manual, but so many of the ideas mentioned in your letters and replies are involved that I felt I had to write. I hope you feel it might help someone if you print it.

Yours sincerely,

■■■■

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The Future of Family Allowance

the facts- Molly Meacher

The operation of the scheme may be illustrated by the following example:

Married couple with three children; gross income of £30 per week:

Take home pay =	Gross income	£30
	Credits (married credit) +	£ 6
	(£2 per child) +	£ 6
		£42
	Less Tax at 30% of £30 —	£ 9
Take home pay =		£33

This family would receive a net gain from the tax system of £3 which, if the credits were paid through the employer, would be added to the husband's wage packet.

Tax Credits are clearly much simpler than the complexities of child tax allowances varying with the age of the children, clawed back family allowances and a means tested family income supplement claimed by about half the families entitled to it. When, then, has so much energy been spent by women's organisations of every political hue and by the poverty lobby urging the rejection of the scheme?

Before we turn to the fundamental criticism of the scheme which has not yet been answered, let us look briefly at the major concessions to women embodied in three recommendations of the Committee. These could provide greater financial independence for women than seemed conceivable six months ago. Three groups of women will be considered in turn:

Working Married Women

The Green Paper originally proposed that all working married women should be excluded from the tax credit system. Their husbands should receive a married credit (said the Green Paper) and the 'dependent' wife should receive the wife's earned income relief as under the present system. Such an arrangement would perpetuate the relatively generous tax treatment of married couples, both of whom work, but would also perpetuate the invidious side effects such as the continued need for a wife to declare all her income to her husband for his tax return, while he is not required to divulge the same information to his wife.

The Select Committee recommendations:

a) that married women earning £8 per week or more (and thus qualifying for inclusion within the scheme) should receive a single £4 credit, and that their husbands should do likewise.

This arrangement would be less beneficial financially than the Green Paper proposal, but involves an important issue of principle.

b) that married women earning less than £8 per week should receive no credit and be liable to no tax, but that half their single credit should be transferrable to the husband, i.e. in these cases the £6 married credit would be paid to the husband as originally proposed.

Unsupported Mothers

The original Green Paper proposals would have left the majority of single, separated and divorced mothers in a worse position than they are now, with no family allowance and no entitlement to tax credits. However, the case was powerfully argued by the major one-parent family and related organisations for an *improvement* in the situation of unsupported mothers. The Select Committee finally agreed with the Finer Committee that an Unsupported Mothers' Allowance be recommended which would act as a passport to the Tax Credit system. If Mr. Heath accepts the recommendation, the allowance and any other income of an unsupported mother would be taxed at 30%. On the credit side, she would receive the full married credit of £6 plus £2 for each child (at the illustrative levels), and would it seems have an opportunity to escape from the grinding poverty to which the majority of unsupported mothers are now condemned.

Mothers in general

Family Allowances have been notoriously unpopular, particularly amongst pensioners, and the tax credit system was, I believe, seen by many politicians as an ideal opportunity to wind up this 'minor nuisance' in our social security system. Totally unexpected was the nationwide expression of fury at such a proposition - a proposition which succeeded in uniting the Womens Institutes and Women's Liberation Movement

along with the women's organisations of all three political parties behind the battle cry - 'all child credits for mothers!' The bias in the Green Paper towards full payment of child credits to the father and the exclusion of 10% of the population from the scheme have been rejected by the Select Committee. Instead the Committee has recommended unanimously a child endowment of £2 to be paid direct to every mother through the Post Office for every child including the first.

It only now remains for Mr. Heath to approve these three recommendations, and with his popularity rating amongst women falling almost as fast as the value of the pound, he can be expected to include all three policies in his 1974 election manifesto.

The reforms for women could be effected under either the existing tax system or under a Tax Credit system, and three Labour members of the Committee made clear their preference for the retention of the PAYE tax system with the three reforms built into it. Barbara Castle in fact takes the reform of the taxation of women considerably further than do the majority of the Committee. In her amendments to the majority report she includes a recommendation that women (or men) caring for children under 5 should be treated as 'working people' entitled to a working person's credit of £4. Women with dependent children of 5 and over should, says Mrs. Castle, ultimately be entitled to receive the £2 credit (the difference between the single and married credit) with the family allowance payment. The exception to this rule would, of course, be working mothers who would be entitled to the full £4 credit.

Married women under retiring age with no dependents who do not work would receive no credit and their husbands would ultimately receive a £4 single credit instead of a £6 married credit under Barbara Castle's scheme.

The assumption behind these recommendations is that the care of children under the age of 5 is a full time occupation and should be recognised as such. Secondly that women with no dependants have an obligation to support themselves in exactly the same way as men have an obligation, in normal circumstances to work. This assumption raises the question of whether or not anybody

The Tax Credit system has been described by the Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee appointed to examine the proposals, as the greatest tax and social security reform since Beveridge. However, after six months of examining written and oral evidence, the scheme has at last been exposed as a reactionary tax simplification exercise. Nevertheless the Green Paper (issued by the Government in October 1972) stimulated a wholly unexpected nationwide response which has rendered a number of reforms almost inevitable despite the prejudices of the authors of the original proposals.

Before going on to discuss the reforms recommended by the Select Committee it may be helpful to summarise the structure of the tax credit system as presented in the original Green Paper:-

In place of the existing PAYE system with its personal tax allowances, child tax allowances, family allowances and the family income supplement, a very simple system of credits would be introduced as follows:

- a £6 credit for a married couple
- a £4 credit for a single person
- a £2 credit for each child including the first.

(the levels of the credits are illustrative only and give an over-generous impression to the scheme. Credits at the levels given would cost an additional £1300m over and above the cost of existing allowances and benefits).

On the tax side, all households with a total income of less than £5000 a year would be liable to pay 30% on *all* income (except on the tax credits which would be tax free). National Insurance benefits would be taxable, but households depending entirely on supplementary benefits would be excluded from the scheme, and would not receive credits or pay taxes.

should be obliged to earn their living in a capitalist society where a pool of unemployment has so far been regarded as an economic necessity. Most of us would accept the principle behind Barbara Castle's amendment - that men and women in a similar situation should be treated similarly, but one would hope to see parallel developments in the fields of national insurance, retraining and a full employment programme.

As far as women are concerned, then, the Tax Credit debate has brought a number of radical ideas into the centre of the political arena. It might well seem surprising then that many of the activists in the family allowance campaign as well as three Labour M.P.s on the Select Committee oppose the tax credit system as a whole. One has to turn to the redistributive effects of tax credits to find an explanation.

The structure of the tax credit system would preclude any radical redistribution of income through taxation. Every household of a given size with an income between about £400 and £5000 a year would benefit equally. For instance a single person earning £15 per week would receive a net gain of 57p per week under the new system; similarly a single person earning £100 per week would gain by 57p a week. The only exceptions to this rule would be families now receiving means tested benefits. Any gain as a result of receiving tax credits would tend to render families ineligible for a number of benefits. Low income families would therefore tend to benefit least from the system.

Furthermore the fact that *tax free* credits would be paid to 90% of the nation (the self employed, supplementary benefit recipients and those earning less than £8 per week would be excluded from entitlement to the married and single credits) would make any anti-poverty measure within the system prohibitively expensive. One of the arguments always raised against any increase in family allowances has been the cost involved; but family allowances are heavily taxed so that any increase costs very considerably less than would an increase in tax free tax credits. It is clear therefore that the exponents of tax credits would be content to see the perpetuation of the means test system for 'the poor' and the introduction of a tax system which would make very difficult any redistribution of income

from the higher income groups to those with below average earnings.

The three Labour Members of the Committee are recommending acceptance of the Child Endowment section of the Chairman's Report, a One Parent Family Allowance and the separate taxation of working wives, but all three reject tax credits. They would like to see a redistribution of income through progressive tax rates within the PAYE structure, and higher national insurance pensions along with the three reforms for women.

It seems likely that Mr. Heath will accept the Select Committee Chairman's recommendations, and that the Labour Party will accept the proposals of the three Labour rebels on the Committee. Whether or not tax credits come into operation will probably, therefore, depend upon the results of the General Election likely to be held next year. But whatever the decision on tax credits we can expect both major parties to be committed to a series of exciting reforms for women - an ironic twist in view of the original intention of the authors of the Green Paper to eliminate family allowances and limit the credits almost entirely to the male population!

Molly Meacher

OVERSEAS

5,000 abortive deaths

Executive vision

EUROSURVEY, a leading European management selection company, recently did a series of in depth interviews to discover how 'executive wives' and husbands see their role. It tells us that virtually all wives not only knew what their husbands did (wow!), but also formulated a job-description whose accuracy was astonishing! The Japanese women interviewed came up with an interesting twist: opposing reduction of the man's working week because 'increasing men's leisure would be tantamount to reducing our own'.

Lesbian marriage

LESBIAN MARRIAGE An Australian minister has conducted a marriage ceremony for two gay women believed to be the first in the country. The Rev. Mario Schoemaker said he had performed the ceremony in the Perth headquarters of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP). 'If two people love one another, regardless of their sex,' he says, 'and they want to express this love in a literal, physical sense, that is, in a ceremony, the Church has no right to refuse them.'

MEXICO Every year, five thousand Mexican women die from bungled abortions, says the Mexican Social Security Institute. It estimates that six hundred and fifty thousand abortions a year are carried out in Mexico, where abortion is illegal. Moreover, public hospitals spend about a hundred and sixty million pounds a year on treatment for women suffering complications from abortion.

Sperm bank

FRANCE'S FIRST SPERM BANK, which has been seeking donors since it opened in January, cannot muster enough volunteers. French doctors and the Roman Catholic Church condemn the whole idea as adulterous and unnatural. And Paris's Kremlin-Bicetre hospital, a pioneer in artificial insemination and research into male sterility, has outraged French wives by its attempts at stock-piling. Professor Georges David, a research scientist at the hospital, says: 'Each donor must give his sperm free, be married, under 40, have at least one normal child and have his wife's consent'. His big problem, he says, is that the wives often resent the gift of their husband's sperm and consider it to be an unfaithful act, adultery. His shortage of stocks at the

moment 'is very much a case of demand exceeding supply'. The bank sends sperm to researchers investigating the causes of male sterility. They require a large number of normal sperm samples to make comparison tests. The bank also puts aside the sperm of paralysed men or men about to undergo an operation which might result in making them sterile for their future use. But the bank's main function is to supply sperm to infertile couples eager to have children. In France last year, one thousand children were born after artificial insemination.

Bird prices up

BIRD PRICES UP Europeans are concerned about meat prices, but in Malaysia it's womanflesh that's up; the price of rural Malaysian brides is rising. The fee for such a bride depends on beauty, ability and educational status, and can range from 40 to 800 dollars; ten years ago, parents of brides settled for half as much. The high prices are to cover expenses, 'wedding gold', (a gold ornament to commemorate the wedding) and the 'serba satu' or a set of clothes. Another element which has sent prices up is the fact that it is important to keep up with the Joneses (or perhaps Ahmads??)... it is considered shameful to get less for one's daughter than the neighbours. Although a western bride receives a ring, pays for her own wedding, and arranges her own trousseau, it doesn't sound all that different from wedding bells chez nous!

Breeding non-stop to avoid being arrested

A SARDINIAN WOMAN who has been making babies to avoid arrest, has been granted mercy after her lawyer sent a petition to the Italian president. Thirty-nine year old Elena Sainas gave birth to a baby every year from 1969, when she already had five children, to prevent police from taking her after being convicted of selling impounded goods, a crime carrying a sentence of two months' imprisonment. According to Italian law, a woman convicted of minor crimes cannot be jailed if she is pregnant.



It's only inner sun tan

An American journalist once described the look on the faces of the supporters of Guru Marahaj ji as inner sun tan. It's one of the best descriptions yet. Very warm, very glowing, but lacking any vitality or truth. More artificial than real.

Guru Marahaj ji arrived in England on July 11th. With him came hundreds of supporters, American radicals like Rennie Davis, poets, mystics et al, hundreds of 'blissed-out' people all eager to celebrate the coming of the Divine Light to our dark shores which have miraculously survived without it for so long. In 1971 the Divine Light Bank Account in England stood at £10, it's now nearer £100,000. In 1971 there were 200-300 supporters in this country, now there are anything between 3000 and 15,000, depending on whose stories you want to believe.

Among the followers from America was an ex-member of the women's movement. I met her briefly at the Guru's press reception - needless to say he did not appear, claiming that it was not the right atmosphere for him to be present, and preferring to leave the work of dealing with cynical questions to his team of PR men. She asked me to visit her at the Divine Light Ashram in Golders Green the following day.

Susan Gregory is now 31. She grew up in Pennsylvania, went to college, married a business man, found she couldn't live with the situation of being a housewife, left her husband and became involved in student politics in Chicago in 1968. In Chicago she met Rennie Davis, one of the defendants in the Chicago Conspiracy trial. She worked on the trial with him, and about a year later they left to live in Washington, where Susan started to involve herself in the women's movement.

'Women were beginning to discover themselves - and they discovered the sense of humanhood in finding oneself. Coming from an oppression where women hated women, and I hated myself and other women - it was a natural thing for me to join the movement. It restored my confidence and I began to feel that I was doing something positive to help other women who were also in an oppressed state. Back in 1969 I never dreamt that the movement would be torn apart by infighting and political splits.'

Soon after arriving in Washington, Susan moved into an all women's commune, which was set up for a fortnight, by a group of ten women to talk and discuss FLF - feminist life force. 'We found that we couldn't really define sexism without considering spirituality. So we began by looking at the bible - and discovering how strong the religious attitudes have been in conditioning the way people think. We also began looking deep into our own history - right back to the times when men didn't understand their role in procreation - when the female was a real goddess, full of all sorts of unexplainable powers and mysteries. Through this we started to understand how women had been abused and neglected'.

The group of women in the commune started publishing 'Up from Under', the first radical feminist paper in the US. The issue of lesbianism became the pivot point which destroyed Susan's confidence in the movement, and created great splits among the women in Washington. 'It was totally arm twisting' she said, 'women were claiming that to be truly feminist no woman must have contact with men.'

The whole movement, at least in Washington, where the lesbian issue was strongest and most bitter, began to take on very fascist overtones. One night there was a terrible meeting - it was literally: if you are not with us then you are against us - I knew then I had to get out, although I could not articulate it at that stage I felt very strongly that everyone was lacking a oneness, something to hold people together which couldn't be provided out of the people themselves.'

'I left Washington and went to the country on my own. The night after I left I found myself sleeping in a field and I had this intense spiritual experience. I felt for the first time that there was more in the world than people. I became conscious of myself in relation to the universe, it was so much bigger than I was, and so much more powerful.'

That feeling didn't make Susan rush off to either a church or an ashram, she rejoined the movement in New York and started working on the McGovern campaign with Rennie Davis and others. A year's work and the defeat of McGovern at the elections, left her feeling exhausted, with a sinking realisation of what another four years of Nixon

would mean to America. She and the others who had been working on the campaign moved out of the centre of the political arena. 'It was a sudden realisation that no matter what we did, no matter how hard we fought and campaigned, it just wasn't going to work. We weren't going to be able to change things that way. All through the year of working on the campaign, I constantly felt the need to recapture my spiritual contact with the universe. I knew nothing about Guru Marahaj ji until one day someone telephoned me and asked if I would like to go and help make a film of the signing of the Vietnam peace treaty - it was being made by someone called Guru Marahaj ji. I didn't go, I didn't believe in the idea of there being one master, one knowledge. But then, as I saw my friends becoming involved, I started to change my mind - I realised that he did have the answer, the only one, I received knowledge and saw the light'.

The knowledge cannot be learned - it just is. There's obviously some level that has to be crossed before one can understand what seeing the light means. I definitely haven't crossed it yet. Susan's explanation goes something like this . . . you feel a great light, you feel the great presence, you understand and receive knowledge . . . what knowledge? . . . THE knowledge. Sounds a bit like the password to an exclusive club, which judging by the numbers of people who are joining it, is becoming less exclusive every day.

But how can someone who has been involved with the women's movement for a long time suddenly turn whole heartedly to following a religion which, like most of them, is totally dominated by male gods.

'Through the Divine Light, issues such as male and female don't really arise. We are all one, one in the knowledge that Guru Marahaj ji gives us. I find I can cope with my life now - I work in the mission in Denver much of the time, spreading the word; helping people to relate to life on a different plane. Politics, that is material politics, must be brought into contact with spirituality, only that way will things change. I feel that my work in the mission is far more important to the welfare of the world and especially to women than my work in the movement ever was.'

I asked her how the Divine Light could help someone whose material conditions were such that every ounce of energy had to be concentrated on trying to feed their children: 'Well, we can help them see themselves in a larger context, we can put the problems into a perspective. After all, we are just so small in terms of how vast the universe is . . .' OK, for tomorrow, how about today?

Of abortion she says 'One's consciousness should be so high - one won't become pregnant', but she, like the other women I talked to, was evasive about whether or not they would have an abortion if they became pregnant.

But if Divine Light aims to change the world, which it does, to make it a better and 'spiritually more healthy' place to live in, how are they going to achieve it? Carol Greenberg, a member of the Divine Organisation for the Spiritual Welfare of women, formerly known as the Divine Organisation of Women, put it like this 'Well, we are working on Richard Nixon, there's no reason why he can't receive the light'.

Rosie Boycott



Guru Maharaj ji

Taking women off their page

A women's page in a newspaper or not? It's a popular question and one that has been debated on women's pages and TV programmes for some time. However, one newspaper which has missed the limelight, has actually solved the problem.

Earlier this year the Birmingham Post scrapped its women's page. Barbara Crossette, an American who has worked in Britain since 1967, most recently as features editor of the Birmingham Post explains why: 'The women's page editor, Linda Millington and myself, felt that it was time to do away with the idea of women's pages. While such pages exist in any paper, women's news will not be taken seriously; it will always be associated with fashion, cooking and other domestic trivia. It's impossible to take something seriously while it is treated as a minority interest subject and of little importance.'

So, all women's news in the paper now appears alongside all other items. Linda is still the women's editor, and, apart from keeping her eye on those

specifically female topics of medicine and the social services, she is now able to devote alot of time to consumer affairs and the more political aspects of women's rights. 'We hired a man,' Barbara continues, 'to write about fashion - as art'

Continuing the Sark saga....

At the moment, due to the tourist trade, there is a lull in the fight for married women's rights in Sark and the opponents of the old law that wives are their husbands' chattels and have no legal right to separate possession of property are keeping their fingers crossed that the island parliament, at its meeting at Michaelmas, will change its collective mind and vote decidedly for a Married Women's Property Act to be prepared.

The news media of the world are interested in the subject which, to most of them, is unbelievable. Since the June meeting of the parliament decided to defer making a decision on the introduction of a Married Women's Property Act until October, journalists

and photographers from England, Italy and America have all visited the island, and Australia is being kept informed by radio. An Italian journalist did a study in depth of the whole legal situation of wives in Sark and found himself 'bogged down' in the laws which give women material protection on the one hand and, on the other, allow them to be 'chastised' by their husbands and give them no recourse to the help of the

Court except in absolutely dire circumstances.

At the moment, there is no question of changing the law which permits husbands to chastise their wives, nor to allow divorce in Sark. Opponents of the Married Women's Property law proposal fear that it is just the 'thin end of the wedge' and that further changes will follow.

It is unfortunate that, in Sark, many of the people most convinced that the law relating to married women must be changed, have decided 'not to talk' to press, radio or television, until the next sitting of the island parliament. "If they don't pass the law then" commented one mother of young daughters, "I'll really let

them have it!"

Unfortunately, that will be too late. In the meantime, the opposition is being as vocal, as publicly, as ever!

Opponents of the law change say that people who come to live in Sark should either accept the old laws, or else go back to where they came from. If they did this, then a possible two-thirds of the adult female population could leave the island in one ugly rush, as it has been estimated that of all the married couples in Sark, one third are completely Sarkese (both couples born and bred on the island); one third are half and half (Sark and incomers) and one third are both incomers. It would be quite easy for the two-third majority to stage a Lysistrata protest and convince the unconvinced members of the male population, surely!

Elizabeth Le Feuvre

Contraceptive charges

Contraceptives will soon be subject to prescription charges after all.

It looked for a while as though a free family planning service

It's not easy

In these days when record companies and artists all seem to be going for the lowest common denominator, the instant hit; when the criteria for mass appreciation would appear to be the whiteness of a smile, the width of a bum or the noise level of a tediously repetitive riff *It's Not Easy* to try and keep a sense of musical values.

But you must. You must and we must. Or we'll end up making tins of peas and putting them on our stereo systems.

For the discerning few who seem to have gone into temporary hiding, CBS and Epic Records have recently released some very tasty albums. Here are some of them:

Andy Pratt



Rolling Stone called him "one of the most uninhibited not to say eccentric talents in recent memory". 'Avening Annie' is the single that Rolling Stone called "one of the classic singles of this or any other year". p.s. he used to play with Edgar. EPC 66646

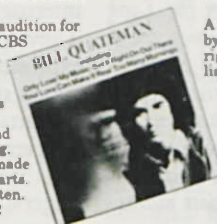
Nicky Hopkins

'The Tin Man Was A Dreamer' If you don't know ace keyboard session giant Nick Hopkins... sufficient to say that on his CBS debut album he enjoys a little help from George, Mick, Klaus, Bobby, Jim, Jerry and Chris. CBS 66416



Bill Quateman

Failed an audition for Motown! CBS loved him. Now a lot of Americans love his singing and performing. And he's made the US charts. Have a listen. CBS 66322



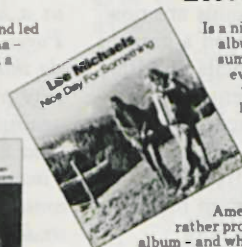
Azteca

A seventeen-piece rock band led by Coke Escovedo (Santana - right?) has got to be worth a listen. Very raunchy lady Wendy Paulogson vocals. CBS 66011



Lee Michaels

Is a nice enough album for a summer day - even in winter. He plays organ, writes and sings and has enjoyed a couple of hits in America. He's rather proud of this album - and who are we to argue. CBS 66651



It's not easy but it's good



might be a possibility when the House of Lords strongly rejected a Bill already passed in the Commons which would make all contraceptive supplies bear the standard 20p prescription charge. Labour peeresses had been particularly vocal in demanding a totally free service, and the Lords defeat caused a minor constitutional conflict.

But last month (July) the Lords backed down and agreed to accept the plans of the Health Secretary, Sir Keith Joseph. The Government's attitude is that the prescription charge is unlikely to act as a deterrent because it will normally cover several months' supplies.

Local authorities already providing a free FP service will not be allowed to continue to do so. The Government line? That it would be 'damaging to a national policy' to have different arrangements in different parts of the country on a 'haphazard basis'.

Some interesting figures came to light during the Lords debate. Lord Vernon said the Government was making a big mistake in not scrapping prescription charges because it would only cost an extra £3 million pounds a year. Lord Avebury said that every pound spent on family planning would mean a saving of £25 on maternity benefits, child care, educational services and the cost of unwanted children getting into trouble.

Susanna Raby.

Nowhere to play

Four playgroups in Kensington and Westminster are being forced to close down due to lack of funds. For the past three years the groups have been funded by the Dutch Van Leer foundation. However this source of money is about to come to an end, and the groups are now expected to survive on a grant from the local councils of £100 a year - to cover rent and minimal maintenance - but no wages.

To obtain grants from the council any play group has to approach the Pre-School Playgroup Association (PPA). PPA is a voluntary, charitable organisation which liaises with the councils, but has its own peculiar set of rules about how play groups should be run. Firstly, PPA does not consider it necessary to have full time, salaried workers. They also expect the parents to pay sums of around 50p a day to have

their children looked after. The playgroups in Notting Hill were charging 5p a day, and employing several full time workers. As they say, 'It is ridiculous not to have full time workers - if every mother has to do part time work with the playgroup then how can she have a regular job? It's also disgusting that the councils expect women to do this job voluntarily. Playgroups are a vital part of a community; looking after a group of children is a skilled job, we've all done training schemes, and should be paid as such'.

At the moment they have enough funds left over to last till September, then the women who run the playgroup are planning to go on strike. 'If we don't get paid, then we will have to go out to work - which means that we are not even using the skills we've been trained for. Going on strike is the only way that we can prove to the council that it is essential to have a playgroup that runs like this. At the moment there are about 40 mothers using the 3 groups in Notting Hill; they don't realise quite how bad the situation is.'

The women have approached several charities to ask for funds - the charities reply that as they have been established for so long they should make the councils support them. As one woman put it - it's Catch 22.

An open meeting is planned for the 6th of September at 10.30 a.m. at the Metro Club, St Lukes Road, W11. All mothers with children of pre-school age are invited. Any donations or suggestions for how to raise money to Powis Play Groups, 60, St Ervans Road, London W10.

Miss Matus

As grateful as all at Spare Rib are to Robert Lacey for wishing us a happy birthday on the Look Pages of the Sunday Times, we do think he could find a better way to break down sexist barriers against female mathematicians (and use up space in the Sunday Times) than holding a beauty contest to find the prettiest maths student.

Change of Address

The women's centre in Lancaster has moved to 33 Primrose Street for the next few months while they are looking for a permanent place.

150,000 women prisoners

At least half of the estimated 300,000 political prisoners in the prisons of South Vietnam are women; they have fought side by side with men in the war, and their treatment in prison differs only from that meted out to men in that their biology makes them particularly vulnerable to the sadism of their captors.

Ms. Le Thi Do, a 27 year old bakery worker from Nha Trang Province, a former prisoner released on May 7 this year, is at present touring Europe with a Buddhist monk, the Venerable Thich Vien Hao, also a former prisoner, to describe conditions and to urge support for those still in prison.

was unable to feed her baby because her nipples had been destroyed.

After 45 days of interrogation, she was taken without trial to Nha Trang Prison where she was kept for three years with common law prisoners. There was strong solidarity among the women; they took turns to go without food to supplement the meagre rations of a woman who was sick, and staged a successful protest against the desecration of the bodies of women beaten to death. By shielding a body with their bodies, attacking guards with their fingernails, and climbing the prison walls to call for support to the guards and to the villagers outside, they were



Le Thi Do's father "disappeared" when she was six, her mother died when she was eighteen. Her brother, looking after cattle, was killed by an American bomb at age eighteen. She herself was arrested in March 1969, and taken for interrogation to a police station. They asked her about an explosion at Na Trang, of which she knew nothing. She was attacked by twenty policemen, armed with bayonets; nails were driven into her fingers; she was injected with drugs; and questioned again by American advisers.

Her flesh was burned and torn with pincers; she was forced to drink peppered, soapy water; she was half drowned and frequently beaten. Other women were raped, had their genitals and nipples burned with electrodes, and beaten. Numerous pregnant women had miscarriages, and one mother

able to ensure the handing over of one body to relatives.

Le Thi Do's release came as a complete surprise to her; on May 7 she was taken away from the prison in a truck. It was usual for prisoners to be taken away suddenly like this, and killed. "But the truck stopped and we saw the flag of the PRG and we knew we were going to be released."

She was sure that world public opinion was an important force for the better treatment and release of prisoners. News of worldwide protest filtered through to the jails, and raised morale.

If you would like to "adopt" a prisoner in South Vietnam, i.e. write to her, and pester the authorities demanding her release and better treatment, please write to the British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam, 14 Grays Inn Road, London W.C.1.

Zoe Fairbairns

Why Ruth Leon didn't take the job

Everyone knows that the Movement in the States has more impetus than in Britain, mainly because the presence of more conservative conservatives causes a gathering of more militant militants. So London Ruth Leon, at 28 a key figure in Washington's TV hierarchy, must really startle both kinds of Americans: she's a low-key Women's Liberationist but a deceptively strong feminist.

Ruth recently became programme controller for London's Capital commercial radio station after competition with 300 men, but turned the post down finally because it would mean an indefinite separation from her husband Michael Mosettig, an NBC editor in Washington, committed to staying until the Watergate fiasco subsides. She expected indignant criticism from radicals over this but didn't get it - probably because she made it abundantly clear in her press interviews at the time that it had been her own decision not to take the job and that in her opinion that was what women's lib was all about; making your own decisions. "I only hope" she says with concern "that in turning it down for the reasons I had, hasn't screwed up chances for other women."

Ruth feels that in America consciousness is higher because prejudice is greater. "In England the women are aware of a sense of history and they know that just as events have happened before them, more will continue happening after they've gone. American feminists don't have that feeling and are more desperate to do things *now* because they feel if they aren't done now they never will be."

As director of cultural programmes for the public service station WETA (an equivalent in England would be a BBC head of drama). Ruth works 15 hours a day and so she and Michael have their housekeeping routines to a fine art. They spend one day a month in the kitchen together cooking 14 meals which they then deep freeze and use over a few weeks. She makes his and her own clothes or has her mother send over Marks and Spencer garments; they cook and shop together but she has the know-how when it comes to

making shelves. She has the organisational zeal - which she says she picked up in an Israeli Kibbutz - which allows two busy people to have the occasional evening when they can actually talk to each other.

"Any woman who tells me she can't do a job because she has a family and house to run is fooling herself" says Ruth. "It must be done if women really want to move forward. I'm not denying I'm incredibly lucky. Mike is into feminism even more than me and I came later to the concept than he did."

Ruth Leon does not belong officially to the movement in the US and does not want to be involved but in her own way through the Washington TV network is supplying viewers with discussion programmes such as Women, Choices and Challenges which involved radical lesbians and suburban housewives. She is in a unique position to push American consciousness - and possibly conservative consciousness - further along.

However, much of her anger at present day inequality is directed against the women themselves, and the inability of the average woman to think in concrete terms about her life. "Women don't think. They get married and go off and live somewhere like Purley and they aren't happy. And they wonder why they are in that situation. It's simply because they haven't thought: 'what do I want to do with my life?'"

"We spend an excruciating amount of time talking. But you've just got to get into places where there is inherent discrimination and start altering it. You mustn't stand on dignity and refuse to be a secretary to start with. When I started I wouldn't have minded scrubbing floors as long as I had a chance to get in."

Ruth started her career in tv as a researcher for Granada in England. She moved to Washington three years ago with Michael, experienced five months out of work but then moved to WETA and now has a staff of three men and three women. Some of her recent ideas include mounting an all-black opera and co-opting a repertory company specially for the tv station. "Not everybody likes me here" she admits. "although my aggressiveness can seemingly be more accepted here than in England where I was 'that bumptious Ruth Leon'."

Her staff, both men and women, put maximum effort into working for her. "I try to

employ a woman when I can" she says "because I simply think its our turn now."

Judy Kirby

Oh Mother

In the chemist's shop where I work, I see a good deal of insulting advertising aimed at women, and have many a ding-dong, not completely devoid of humour, with the reps. (invariably men) who earnestly try to extol the virtues of aerosol vaginal deodorants, depilatory creams ad nauseum. Some of the 'literature' - supposedly ethical! - must have been written by tongue-in-cheek hacks, but the latest booklet in our dispensary 'Time To Be A Mother' presented free by 'Mother' magazine together with the firm of Maws, made me wonder if this really was 1973.

Should I, well into middle age, now be sitting in the chimney-corner, little lace cap on my silver locks, instead of cavorting about in mod. specs, long straight blonde hair, clumpy-heeled shoes?



It's a long time since I produced my own two children, yet I think I would have seen scarlet even in those far-off days of their babyhood if I'd read goo like this:

'To be a wife and mother is a service of the best kind: the care of at least two other human beings for the most important years of their lives. It covers the formative years of the child and the most ambitious years of the husband. Both need the constant support that only a woman can give.'

The nourishment given by the mother builds the body of the *man* the child is to become, and nurtures the mind that is to join others in building the nation.

She also restores the house and its occupants to order, for the mother is the centre of the family and creates a

home fit for *men* to live in.' (The italics are mine).

The author of the article, Patricia Gilbert, from which this extract is taken happens to be 'B.A. - mother of four' - indeed all the stuff is written by women, a social anthropologist, a doctor (of medicine, I assume), a nurse, a consultant psychologist. I had better be careful about pre-war Teutonic attitudes. All too sadly I have to admit they are still prevalent in my own very mixed neighbourhood - working-class, lower-middle, middle-middle - if we have to be pigeon-holed, which I accept we are, sociologically. Is there any wonder?

What about this . . . 'To be a mother is to sacrifice all one's personal desires . . . ' 'To be a mother is to be a Jack of all trades . . . ' JACK? This month's deliberate mistake? Or is Jill still stumbling after?

It occurs to me that most women who read 'Mother' might not - er- conceivably have a standing-order for 'Spare Rib'. I look forward to seeing 'Father' in the rack (not on it) at my local newsagent's, complete with a free booklet from some enterprising company - manufacturers, say, of condoms. Or a do-it-yourself vasectomy kit. This would help to pass the time for dad, because, as one article says, 'From a husband's point of view, the new mother may seem to be making rather heavy weather of motherhood. This is partly because many babies cry in the evening just when the husband comes home and the woman is preparing a meal for him.'

'If the man is hungry and has to wait while his wife copes hastily with the baby, or if they both sit listening anxiously to it crying while they are trying to eat, each evening can become a harrowing ordeal. It is necessary to be very practical in this situation. It may be a good idea to plan a cold first course so that the husband can have this, perhaps with a drink, while the wife tops up the baby'.

Our consultant psychologist, Sheila Kitzinger, M.A. makes the very valid point that it is not a good idea to poke or push the baby - a mother should talk normally to him, thus teaching him language. He is exhorted to 'Give teddy a hug' - 'Kiss daddy goodbye'.

I should think daddy would be delighted to clear off - cold first course or not.

Lyn Cooper
Totley Rise
Sheffield, S17 4HH.



City of
Leicester Polytechnic

Engineering may seem for men only - but that could be women's fault

At present only two female students are enrolled in Electronics and none in Mechanical Engineering, despite no sex barrier. The only entry requirement is two A-levels for a degree course and one A-level and appropriate O-levels for a diploma course.

If engineering is not your bag, you can choose from these other fields of study:

**Pure and Applied Science
Business, Management
Law, Social Sciences
Public Administration
Mathematics, Computing, Statistics
Graphics
Fashion and Textile Design
Textile and Knitwear Technology
Environmental Design and Construction
Fine Art, Humanities, Educational Studies
Physical Education**

Should you prefer a "traditional feminine" subject, there is the three-year Diploma course in Contour Fashion - the new name for foundation garment and lingerie design. This is the only course of its kind in Europe in this specialised field - and here we do not discriminate against men taking it.

Term begins 27th September.

We shall be happy to supply potential students with full information about our courses. Please write to Department RY/WL

**City of Leicester Polytechnic
P.O. Box 143, Leicester, LE1 9BH**

The name of the game (à la française)

The fight to initiate 'sexual clinics' in France, staffed by 'nurses' and controlled on a municipal level has been going on since 1970 under the leadership of Dr. Peyret, a deputy from Vienna. The possibility that such a proposal may soon be placed before the National Assembly has provoked widespread interest in French society, amongst the highly placed gentlemen of the parliament who sometimes frequent the brothels, to the girls who staff them and the underworld figures whom their earnings support.

As discussion mounts on the issue, *Le Monde* has joined the fray, and recently has been telling it 'comme il est,' in a series of articles which reveal that at least 100,000 French girls prostitute themselves - 30,000 professionally. Girls operate in all sorts of ways, to suit every taste and class level, from the professional houses, to the casual young strollers, who will have a go if the price and the guy are right. Others ostensibly sell door to door, anything from toothbrushes to beauty soap until they find a customer who wants to sample more of their wares.

Of the girls in the game, nine out of ten are in the hands of a pimp or procurer who controls their 'professional life' and their earnings. Each evening five more girls take to the streets in Paris alone.

Financially, prostitution is big, if illegal, business; it continues to be the main source of regular income for the French 'milieu' (underworld) with approximately 3 thousand million francs, one sixth of all illegal earnings in France being derived from it. None of this is taxed of course, and one body of opinion in France that supports reform are the tax officials, cheated of this source of revenue.

Official legislation against procuring and prostitution is tough; laws 334 and 335 of the penal code set out severe punishments for all those who live from prostitution, yet the line is hard to draw. What of the taxi driver who sends the tourist on his way, or the hotel porter who smooths the way for assignations? Then there are the lawyers who for generous fees will get clients off the hook, and the doctors who treat venereal disease without reporting it.

The laws which stipulate up to

5 years of imprisonment, 250,000 francs fine and closure of the establishment upon conviction are hardly ever so strictly applied. It's risky to bring a complaint in any case, when 'enforcers' are likely to forcibly remind the complainant that pimps have friends. Thus, the hypocrisy of the law itself encourages the continuation of prostitution.

Le Monde feels that this hypocrisy is allowed to persist for a number of reasons; police themselves often feel that procurement and prostitution serve a useful purpose. Many consider houses to be a good source of information on other underworld doings. 'We've got to be a bit tolerant,' says the former police commissioner Charles Janvilliey, 'It's a way to make friends and contacts.' The general public seems to see prostitution as an 'inevitable evil,' which can at best be limited and controlled along the lines of the government of privately owned 'centres' in Germany and Austria. Sixty-three per cent of the French public put forward such a view, surveyed in November 72 by a regional newspaper, *Sud-Oest*.

Others justify turning a blind eye to prostitution on the grounds that in every society there are sexual perverts or deformed people who can only have sex through rape or prostitution, with prostitution being the lesser evil. In fact, the prostitutes questioned by *Le Monde* denied that such clients approached them, and pointed out that those who prefer violent sex are unlikely to be tempted by paid favours. The claim that to bring prostitution into the open would raise the crime rate doesn't appear to be the case either; the opposite in fact appears to be true since areas of illegal prostitution seem to breed crime. Liberalised legislation in France in the 50's didn't in any way lead to increasing crime rates in the following years.

The sexual needs of foreign workers who most frequently come to France on their own is also often cited as a reason to allow prostitution to continue; in fact, the 'guest workers' seldom frequent prostitutes, particularly the more highly-priced ones. To maintain that their isolation should be ended through contact with prostitutes is a sorry way indeed to skirt the issue of racism in French society which creates the loneliness of the foreign workers.

On the other side of the argument, in favour of stricter control of the game, the point is

often made that abolition of prostitution would cut down on the spread of venereal disease. At the moment, following legislation passed in the 60's, there is no longer the legal obligation for prostitutes to carry identity cards certifying that they are free from disease. A prostitute who is a minor however, can be obligatorily treated for venereal disease on the orders of a minors' court judge. In fact, venereal disease is largely spread through promiscuity unrelated to prostitution; furthermore, it appears that more and more men and young boys are spreading the disease in homosexual activity, so that exercising control only over prostitutes is no way of control.



Early home life seems to play a major role in determining who will go on the game. Those interviewed by *Le Monde* shared many common elements in their backgrounds - separated parents, alcoholic fathers, forced sex at an early age, often with a relative, unsuccessful school years leading nowhere in terms of professional qualifications, unhappy love affairs. The final step usually occurs when country girls drift in to the big city. One third of the prostitutes in Paris, for example, come from the small poverty stricken farms of Brittany, where handsome young men gradually suggested ways for the girl to earn money to help them . . . perhaps to start a business, perhaps for an eventual marriage. Many such arrangements become permanent, where the girl may take in say, 800 francs an evening, of which 600 will go to her 'protector'. Only at the very top and very bottom of the profession are girls on their own, at one end because they are rich and attractive and can take care of themselves, and on the other, because they're not worth taking care of.

The independents on the top can make up to 100,000 francs a month; these, however, constitute only 10 per cent of those who prostitute themselves; middle level takings are usually around 20,000 francs per month.

When questioned, *Le Monde's* interview subjects gave a wide variety of reasons for entering the life, ranging from having to find 'something to do after university,' to the necessity of young marrieds to earn a bit on the side to make the hire purchase payments. Students do it too, for a bit of spending money; young ladies find in prostitution a means of revolt against their middleclass backgrounds.

Once in, for whatever reason, getting out is hard. For girls who experience some sort of shock such as attempted suicide which makes them want to change their lives, or for those who'd like to meet a 'nice man' with whom they'd contemplate a stable relationship, the going is rough. Prostitutes often have trouble meeting people outside the 'milieu', particularly those girls from the provinces who knew no-one in the big city, and were quickly sucked into the game. And many become so dependent upon their pimps that they find breaking away psychologically difficult . . . and sometimes dangerous, when a pimp is unwilling to let go of his 'investment'.

Finding and holding a 'straight job' is a problem too; regular hours and mundane occupations are even more difficult to take after a taste of the 'night life'. Many also leave prostitution with a drug or alcoholic problem to overcome, or with heavy fines owing before they can consider their records 'clean'.

And there's very little help available; the only official recognition of the need for aid was a law passed in 1960 which created a service in each county which was to place women 'in danger of prostitution' into lodgings, but provisions are scant and hardly sufficient to the needs.

Some private organisations are fighting the battle; Jean Scelles, ex-national deputy, and mayor of Saint Maurice in the province of Val de Marne, heads an organisation of action teams working to abolish the maltreatment of women and children. The organisation functions as a press agency to over 400 newspapers, supplying them with information on its fight to get laws against procuring through the national assembly.

In surveying the situation, *Le Monde* finds that the widespread tolerance towards prostitution stems from a basic misogyny, shared throughout the western culture. Women also feel this prejudice, in thinking that prostitutes are not 'rivals' or not

similar to themselves in any way. Prostitution is seen to be the result of the present inequality of the roles of men and women in our society, whilst laws only encourage the pimps, leaving what the newspaper sees as the last form of slavery . . . and with no Lincoln in sight.

What could possibly change the situation? One suggestion has been to toughen up treatment of the client. In the United States, the client is prosecuted along with the prostitute; following the revolution in the USSR, one of the first moves taken to control prostitution was to post the names of clients in public places. In any case, studies show that one out of every tenth man in France experiences his first sexual contact with a prostitute. In a man's world therefore, it seems quite unlikely that society would legislate against the client.

Alternatively, the continued trend towards easier sexual relations on all sides may make prostitution 'paying for what you used to get for free,' and more positively, opening professional promotion possibilities and decent salary levels to women in all walks of life may mean that fewer will walk the streets. As long as it takes a month in a shoe shop on your feet all day to earn what a good-looking girl can earn in one night on her back, prostitution will no doubt remain not only at the service of the Lords of the Realm, but the man on the street . . . and most women will continue to prostitute themselves, in one way or another.

Tracy Ulltveit-Moe

Sterility option

Throughout the country 46 per cent of married women are sterilised at the same time as having an NHS abortion, according to DHSS statistics.

Yet at a large London hospital, which makes a point of allowing married women a free choice in the matter, only 10 per cent opted for sterilisation when they had an abortion.

The Abortion Law Reform Society is claiming that gynaecologists are pressuring women who want NHS abortions into being sterilised. Mrs Diane Munday, secretary of the Society, quoted one case where a woman's husband was willing to have a vasectomy, but the woman was still given a combined abortion and sterilisation.

A spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists denied the charge. He added that 'The Royal College does not tell any of its

members how to conduct their practice'.

Woman's body, man's clothes

LESBIANS IN PRISON

wishing to wear male clothing have aroused the concern of Miss Doris Kendall of Stryal Prison, Cheshire. While inmates serving sentences of 6 months or more are entitled to a clothing grant from public funds and Miss Kendall believes that this civilian clothing is good for the woman prisoner's morale, she does not believe that taxpayers should finance male clothing for women. Proposing a motion to this effect at the Prison Officers' Association conference at Blackpool, Miss Kendall noted: 'In a prison situation, there is always a danger that a subculture will take over, and the lesbian group are particularly liable to do this. This faction is disruptive and anti-authority. To allow them to masquerade blatantly as men strengthens their influence over other, vulnerable personalities. There are many women in prison whose marriages and personal relationships are shaky because of their enforced separation. The presentation of another outlet for their affections and sexual needs is bound to seem attractive. Many succumb, thereby destroying the possibility of returning to their husbands and families. Any time now, the result of this situation will be many husbands suing the department for alienation of their wives' affections.' Miss Kendall's motion was unanimously approved by the Association.

And in Southwark, a verdict of accidental death was returned on a 21-year-old mother of two who fell from the balcony of a fifth floor Spanish hotel room after a violent argument with her husband. The husband, Mr Michael Hickling, told the coroner that he thought his wife had killed herself because of her lesbian activities. Mrs. Hickling's brother, who had visited her in the hotel room shortly before her death, testified that he heard Mr. Hickling accuse his wife of being a lesbian and carrying on with girls in the hotel, after which he slapped her, and threw her on the bed, hitting her. Mrs. Hickling had repeatedly denied her husband's charges. A couple in the room next door to the Hicklings heard crying and

screaming later in the night, followed by a tremendous thud. After the verdict of accidental death Mr. Hickling said: "I'm glad it's all over. I feel that my name has been cleared".

Women's Report

A horrible case of harassment

HARASSMENT of a young black woman by Hornsey police has come to light. The woman is in her late twenties, has one child, works with an accountant and lives in a council flat - but the neighbours pile rubbish outside her door and smear excrement on the wall. When she called the police after the latest outrage they shouted at her in front of the neighbours, took her to Hornsey Police station and from there to Friern Mental Hospital, where she was left for 72 hours. When she got out she discovered that her 9 year old daughter had been taken into care. The NCCL say this is the latest of a number of police abuses of the 1959 Mental Health Act, under which the police can 'remove a person from a public place to a place of safety'. But in this case they did not call a doctor or mental health worker before having the woman committed, and she wasn't ill - only very angry.

Women's Report

These sporting times

John Hennessy, a *Times* Journalist, recently wrote on the subject of women and sport. 'It is not for nothing that very free skating championship is rounded off by the women's free skating, offering fewer rotations and less elevated jumps, but feminine grace is more than adequate compensation, to say nothing of the abbreviated dresses'.

Women's Report.

Slurp, Slurp

'Only drips drink Schlitz', 'I am not a contact sport', read two of the signs carried by women in Fayetteville, Arkansas, who were protesting against the advertising campaign of their local Schlitz beer distributor.

The ad read 'Rugby and Women . . . The great contact sports! Make a little contact with Schlitz'. A few weeks later they reported victory in the

newspaper published by the Fayetteville Women's Centre. 'We got a promise of a retraction from the Schlitz distributor. And maybe, just maybe, we really got what we went after . . . the opening of some people's minds as to what kind of advertising really is offensive to women because it treats them as . . . contact sports'.

Burn the Broker

A recent Ensign Insurance Advertisement pitched at women students read like this: 'You may have burned your bra, you may have campaigned for free day nurseries, kept up to date with Germaine in the papers, scorned a drink at the Playboy Club . . . We suggest you fill in our coupon now while you're still young. If not beautiful'. We suggest you burn your nearest Ensign Broker, while he's still young. If not beautiful.

Women's Report

Come back, Norma Levy

M.P. PETER EMERY, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Industry, tells jokes like this on the taxpayers time: Apparently the management services division of the Civil Service recently produced a memo. It encouraged secretary sharing in Whitehall-either horizontally (between officers of equal rank) or vertically (between an officer and a senior). Where are you, Norma Levy, now that we really need you?

Women's Report

Pamphlets

Country Girls in 19th Century England by Jennie Kitteringham,

Pamphlet No. 8 published by the History Workshop, was printed in time to be a contribution to the Women in History Conference. Jennie contrasts her own experience, growing up on various farms, with the research she's done on the lives of nineteenth century working women in rural life. As children, young women and mothers, their lives were tough. They learned to contribute to the family budget from a very early age and later their economic independence often shocked Victorian moralists whose ignorance of the basic reality of these people's lives was blind and hypocritical.

She details the types of work they did in various areas, sometimes in gangs, travelling miles to take seasonal work. A labourer's family was lucky if it managed to own a pig which was 'a walking investment for the harsh winter months . . . The killing of the pig was an important occasion, at once solemn and festive.' Her sources are diverse, her quotes vivid and sometimes startling.

The pamphlet costs 30p plus 10p postage from History Workshop Rushing Coll. Oxford.

Adult Education and Community Action By Mike Newman.

'Classes exist as long as the required number of people attend - thirteen per tutor is the ILEA's magic number'. That's the basic premise of a new pamphlet, *Adult Education and Community action*, written by Mike Newman, himself involved in Adult Education, criticising the way the councils administer evening classes and suggesting ways in which individuals can make local authorities provide the type of courses they want. 1000 copies have been printed, and as they are selling fast a second run is planned.

If you want a copy of the pamphlet please send 20p (to cover cost, postage and packing) to Michael Newman, AE & CA, 50a Pembroke Villas, London W11.

An Introduction to Secular Humanism By Kit Mouat.

Short pamphlet, divided into sections under headings such as Poetry and Truth, Immortality, Humanism in History and the Rights of Women. The Humanist position on women seems slightly unclear: Kit Mouat is feminist herself, she comments on the attitudes of Christianity to women' it is essentially a male centred religion'. Of the humanists she says 'Not all humanists were in favour of the emancipation of women, but it is certainly unreason which sustains active, anti-feminism just as it permits racism and other prejudice based on myths. Today the battle continues, and it is not only in the Stock Exchange and the orthodox churches that they have the right to prevent women from sharing men's opportunities.'

Available from Kit Mouat, Mercers, Cuckfield, Sussex.

SHORT LIST

Films

O Lucky Man (X)

The makers describe the film as the "eternal circle of human experience - the mixture of aspiration, wickedness, fun, humour and folly that is the life of man." For life read fantasy life and for eternal circle of human experience read male fears and dreams. There's no room for ying in this particular circle.

The women in the film act as lay-bys on the Lucky Man's road to success. He's so intent on making money that he has no time for making women. But this, theoretically, makes him irresistible and he has women falling on their backs in front of him throughout the film.

There's the sex starved psychiatrist who helps him into his first job - the lustful landlady who heads for his bed almost as soon as she sets eyes on him - the eager stag party stripper - the mystical heiress groupie who feeds him champagne and grapefruit on her trendy rooftop, and provides a key to daddy's millions - the black statesman's calculating mistress - and, finally, the social worker who feeds him soup when he's down n' out.

The basic mothering role common to all the women becomes overt during the scene in a church when the Lucky Man is suckled by an 'earth mother' amidst the harvest festival fruit and veg.

Malcolm McDowell plays the ever opportunistic man who is the object of all this attention. He travels from one self indulgent scene to the next, helped along by fine photography and excellent music from Alan Price. **RP**

Paper Moon

A ridiculous story of a man (Ryan O'Neal) who cons widows from the Midwest to the Deep South into buying Bibles 'ordered' by their deceased husbands helped and sometimes hindered by his possible daughter (Tatum O'Neal). But a film, thank God, is a lot more than its story. It is the details which rescue this film, and the naturally brilliant acting by Tatum O'Neal which charmed me as much as it did the characters in the film (and I was all prepared for a precocious

performance by the latest little Hollywood star.) She has a boldness that is very unusual in a child heroine. Enough ideology, this is not a film to make you think but as pure entertainment it leaves you feeling warm and mellow. **RA**

The Hireling, on at the Carlton, Haymarket, is an expertly acted and produced film. So slick and successfully 'realistic' that, without a quick joint after quarter of an hour's bored viewing, the plastic quality of the film would have sent me scuttling to the nearest smelly pub.

Stoned, it turned out to be very enjoyable, especially the long car rides Sarah Miles as Lady Franklin takes with Robert Shaw, the chauffeur called Leadbitter to revisit old haunts, the house which reminded her of her dead husband, and eventually to present a silver cup to the boxing club run by Leadbitter. The pregnant pauses, the sexual undertones, the Lady Chatterley story line, were ridiculously funny and Alan Bridges, the director, can only get away with it because he's made the film a period piece.

As the inevitable is about to happen, the car pulls up at a railway crossing and a large, red, danger sign fills the screen. Not a touch of subtlety to the irony. Of course, the upper class Cinderella is about to fall in love with the Prince Charming twit, and the chauffeur is left, virile but frustrated.

It's racist, the way the film perpetuates the distorted version of working class character as seen through middle class eyes. The actress who makes the film worth seeing is Elizabeth Sellars who plays Lady Franklin's mother. Stiff with paint and polite conversation, her alcoholic brittleness is beautifully established and the emotional distance between the mother and daughter horrifically defined. **MR**

Theatre

Woman's Place

The Northcott Theatre Young People's Department are touring a show revealing woman as she is, contrasted with woman as society supposes her to be. The three central figures are 'a Bombastic Compere Male Chauvinist Pig' and 'a housewife and mother' and 'The Perfect Woman' (played by a man). It sounds intriguing. The theatre group are taking the show to schools (fifth and sixth forms) technical colleges and adult

audiences. During September and October they will be in the South west, and from November 19th to December 8th they hope to travel beyond the region - so get booking.

Contact Tessa Loxton, Company Manager, Young People's Theatre Dept. Northcott Theatre, Exeter. Tel. Exeter 56182.

"Here's Mud In Your Eye!"

An Encounter With Dorothy Parker with Janet Amsden as Dorothy Parker at the Heriot Watt Theatre, Grindlay Street, Edinburgh. 229 3574. August 20-September 8.

Womens Theatre Festival

From September for about twelve weeks many new plays by women, entertainments, theatre and writing workshops are happening at the Almost Free Theatre, Rupert Street, London W1. Any performers, writers and technicians interested in participating please contact Pam Gems, 12 Philimore Place, London W.8. Tel. 01-937 9618. Children welcome

Exhibitions

Jazz Seen: The Face of Black Jazz

Valerie Wilmer's photographs of musicians display the entire life style and the experience behind jazz. See the exhibition. September 15th - October 7 Ferens Art Gallery Hull October 20 - November 11 Belfast University

Exporting Feminist Art

Sheila Oliner is exhibiting her paintings and graphics in Israel September 22 - October 10 Beit Rothschild Gallery Haifa.

Cliff Hanging

Exhibition of brightly coloured paintings by Jane Stonehouse. 'I get a picture in my head, like the one of the cliff, and then add things that remind me of my friends. The piano nearly falling off the cliff is inspired by a man I know.'

From September 5 to 27 at The Room, 5 Nelson Road, London SE20.

Events

Aware - Action for women's advice, research and education, are holding an open meeting on September 10, 7.00 p.m. at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

AWARE is a project started by Women's Lobby, to set up a national centre for women which

will provide advice and information, co-ordinate and carry out research and produce educational material. So far, *AWARE* has applied for charitable status, worked out a preliminary budget and statement of aims. The object of the meeting is to discuss the issue, plan future action and set up a working party.

Classified Ads

■ **HELP!** Severely disabled Male Graduate, Sussex University, Seeks Woman 20-45 to care, £15.50 pw + Board. John Williams, 4 Meols Parade, Hoylake, Cheshire.

■ **WOMEN'S BOOKS**, wide range available from 11, Waverley Road, Bristol 6.

■ **GIRL**, 23, Gay, Semi-recluse seeks Penfriends/Companion, any age or status.

■ **CONTACTS UNLIMITED**. The dating service that always pays personal attention to selecting dates that really appreciate you and your scene. Free questionnaire 01-387 8150 (24 hrs) or 2 Gt. Marlborough St., W.1.

■ **MOTHERS IN ACTION** Pressure groups for one-parent families. Monthly meetings to discuss current campaigns. Further details from: Pat Miller, Mothers in Action, Munro House, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG. Tel: 734 3457.

■ **Unfurnished flat** desperately needed anywhere in Central London, Please ring 274 5757 after 6.

■ **ANTI-APARTHEID NEWS** describes what life is like in Vorster's South Africa, carries news of the liberation struggle in South Africa, Rhodesia, Namibia and Portugal's African colonies, exposes British collaboration with apartheid - and involves you in the fight against it. 10 issues a year. Membership of the **ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT** (which includes subscription to **AA NEWS**), £2 pa: subscription only,

75p pa. Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte St., London W.1. Tel 01-580-5311

■ **ATTRACTIVE ROOM** in beautiful luxury flat near Putney for right girl to share with me, one other and two cats. I write for Spare Rib, am a bit of a loner and fanatically tidy but otherwise human. We have a washing machine, cleaning lady etc etc. £40 a month inclusive. Phone Andi on 789 6885, evenings.

■ **Sappho Magazine**. Published by homosexual women for all women. Monthly 30p inc. post. BCM/PE-TREL. London WC1V 6XX. Meeting first Monday each month. upstairs Room, 7.30pm Euston Tavern, Judd St./Euston Rd., London NW1.

■ **SINGLE MOTHER** would like another to share chores/care of children etc in house in Oxford. Tel. Oxford 772190 or write Box No. 151.

■ **WOMEN'S LIBERATION WORKSHOP**. While the Workshop is without premises, you can write to them at 22 Great Windmill Street, London W1, or ring the Kingsgate Place Women's Centre at 01-624 1952.

■ **Women** - if you're homosexual or bisexual why not join the Campaign for Homosexual Equality? Make new friends; help fight for equality. For more details write to Liz Stanley, CHE, 28 Kennedy Street, Manchester.

■ **Exclusive female only** correspondence contacts, etc. For details without obligation send SAE - "Ariadne", The Golden Wheel, Liverpool L15 3HT.

■ **Help Advisory Service**. 79 Buckingham Palace Rd., London SW1 828 7495.

Classified advertising rates: 5p per word, box numbers 50p. Must be pre-paid and sent to Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh Street, London W1A 4XS. Spare Rib reserves the right to refuse classified ads. Please make all cheques and postal orders payable to Spare Ribs Ltd.

SELLOUT

The gentle art of being a
BOSS PLEASER

Isn't just knowing the tricks that keep the boss happy.

...like knowing when it's right to say he's just left...
...sharpening his pencils and smoothing his path...
...feeding the molder, but watching his diet...
All very fine when the boss is in captivity but what about his comfort when he's out of town?

SPARE

BODIES care and maintenance

Point your chin right down to the bottom of the page, then drop your eyes so that you are looking right down, and roll your head to the side, up and round, letting your chin draw a circle in the air. Roll your head back again stretching as far as you can, without moving your shoulders. Some of you will feel dizzy, others will feel the top of your spine click. Do it again, this time feel your neck muscles stretch - then the muscles at the top of your neck. Ignore the aghast stares from the other side of the bus, tube, table.. In a few moments they will start surreptitiously stretching and twisting themselves. The point is that our bodies are in an appalling state and even rolling your head can be painful.



Right from school days, our heads are separated from our bodies. Heads into the classroom, bodies onto the sports field. For little girls it is even more drastic. We are expected to be frail, delicate, and soft, and as we grow older our bodies become mysterious full of rumours and fears. We become scared, ashamed to look, let alone to touch, to feel, to stretch, riggle and jump, & glory in the feeling of ourselves.

Our bodies become stiff clothes pegs, so ill exercised that we are constantly plagued with headaches, backaches and tension that affect everything we do. Our own bodies are actually hampering us from thinking, working and fully enjoying life. A little exercise every day can tone us up and rid us of this 'burden' of flabby muscles and aching joints.



None of these exercises are particularly meant for slimmers. They are more for toning up, keeping you fit mentally & physically. Indirectly though they do help, as many of us over-eat from frustration, boredom and depression. These exercises can go a long way towards releasing and relieving those feelings.

Mainly we are dependant on other people to cure the frustration and relieve our boredom, or on pills for tension.

Here it is a very selfish thing. You are totally WITH yourself, in control. -Loosen your face up first.

ROLL your eyes round, seeing as far as possible. Feel your eyes inside your head, peering out.

WRINKLE up your nose, and twitch it like a rabbit.

POUT your mouth, and point it from side to side. Feel it pull the neck.

GRIN madly.. Tilt your head back and open &-shut your mouth, moving only your lower jaw. Try to WRIGGLE your ears, eyebrows and scalp.



CLENCH your fists tight, with arms up to your chest, screw up your face & curve your spine into a ball, breathing out. Feel angry.. Throw your arms out wide, breath in deep, arching your back..repeat.

For tension in the neck, do the gentle head rolling, then gradually start rotating one shoulder, then the other. Then both together, caterpillar fashion.

Even if we are not one of the lucky ones who enjoy sport, it doesn't mean we never want to enjoy and be actively aware of our bodies.

Keep-fit, women's gymnastics, Medau and dance classes are widely available at local clubs and Adult Institutes, but many people can't get to them owing to various commitments or exhaustion, or they don't want to involve themselves in something that still retains the hearty image of school sports.

right now

There are numerous little toning up movements that you can do right now,

- Stretch out your hand, wriggle your fingers. Twist your hand round in circles. feel the wrist muscles.
- Cross one leg over the other and twist your foot round from the ankle. Draw a circle with your toes. Repeat with your other foot.

- Slump down in the chair, spine curved and head down, breath out. Sit up sharply, breathing in with chest out & shoulders back. Imagine your head is trying to reach the ceiling.

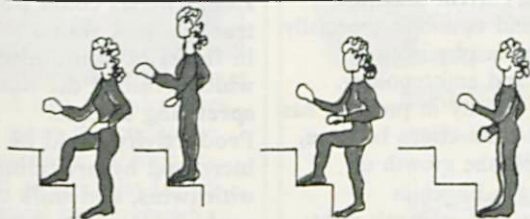


Throughout the day, whatever you are doing, it is important to be constantly AWARE, feeling what you are doing, always stretching your muscles. If you bend over to pick up something, really let yourself drop, feel heavy, shoulders drooping, head hanging. Bounce a bit from your hips, stretching your spine and getting the feeling of being down there. Uncurl slowly taking a deep breath and rise up head last, stretch out your arms and fingers, feel big, tall and proud.

- When you reach up to a shelf, let your whole body rise up, reaching as high as possible on your toes. Feel your spine & ribs stretch. Hold it, and drop back to ground, letting your head & arms dangle to the floor with legs straight. Uncurl your back, slowly letting your head rise last.

PARTS

Whenever possible get your head down, below your heart to get the blood flowing and the neck & spine muscles flexible.

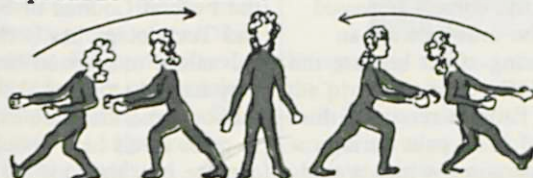


-As you are about to go upstairs, step up one, down again, up & down, as fast as you can. About 10-20 times.

-Next time you want something behind you, leave your feet where they are, slightly apart, and twist round from your hips. Swing both arms round, hands slightly higher than your shoulders. LOOK round too, and swing back and round again. 6-10 times.

Always stretch that bit further, grow that bit taller. Get a bit of TENSION into it. Stretch taut, relax. Tight, hold your breath, and relax.

After trying a few of these movements you will gradually become aware of your whole body crying out for exercise, and might begin to set aside some time for specific exercises.



-PULLING. Imagine you are tugging in a heavy rope, first on one side, then the other. Get a fast rhythm going back & forth, really pulling with tensed arms. Feel all that stale air whoosh out of your lungs. Good for stomach & spine.

-The rocking exercise helps to stimulate the flow of nervous energy through the spinal cord, and hence to the rest of the body. Sit on something soft, keep a curved spine, imagine you are a rocking chair. Keep your head tucked in, do it 4-6 times then relax and breath deeply. This exercise is important as it massages the vertebrae flexes the spine and is invigorating.



-Lie flat on your back, hands to side, slowly curl your back, raising your knees right over to touch your forehead. Uncurl slowly lowering your straightened legs to the floor. Repeat.



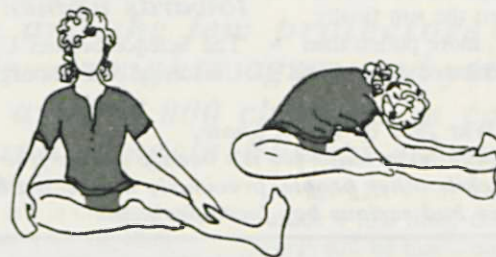
-Lie down supporting yourself on your elbows. Bend left knee and roll it over right leg till it is touching the floor. Repeat with right knee.

-Resting on your elbows, point your left toes into the air and slowly draw three wide circles. Repeat with right foot. Relax, and breath deeply.



-Sit on the floor legs apart. Lift arms above head and gracefully touch left foot with right arm, straighten, and touch right foot with left arm. Alternate 10 times.

-The 'Head to Knee' is a preliminary yoga exercise that helps relieve constipation, indigestion, sluggishness. It strengthens your legs and helps regain lost energy, if you persevere..



Sit up straight on the floor. Tuck left foot against the inside of right thigh. Inhale, letting ribs rise and stomach pull in. Breath out slowly as you bend over to touch your toes with both hands. Don't worry if you can't make it at first, just stretch as far as you can go. Hold it for 3-10 secs. Relax, repeat 3 times and then reverse legs. Lie down and relax. Eventually your forehead should touch your knee..

There are endless variations to these basic exercises that you can carry out at home. Libraries and magazines are a constant source of detailed information. A particularly interesting book is 'SLIMNASTICS' by Pamela Nottidge and Diana Lamplugh. It tells you how you can form your own group at home with friends and children

Whichever exercise you do, remember :

- your head is a continuation of your spine. Let it twist with the movement.
- let your eyes follow the exercise, don't resist the movement, let yourself go
- Keep your heart to the fore. Shoulders straight. Expansive and open.
- don't forget to breath.. Inhale through your nose, and exhale through mouth, right out, empty your lungs.
- if you aren't enjoying it, stop. You will only do yourself good if you put your whole self and SOUL into it..

STEPHANIE GILBERT —
WITH THANKS TO NATASHA GUTTMAN

How scientists are helping us, disturbing us, and exploring us

Was this the first year you've had hay fever? Have you just joined the three million people for whom Summer means either snuffling and sneezing, or snoozing under the influence anti histamine? Even though the grass pollen count has been on average lower this year, there has been a rise in the number of the hay fevered.

Usually pollen is released from early June to August with the count peaking in July. This year, however, damp weather in May and Early June held the release of pollen back, and when the heatwave arrived the pollen sacs in the grasses were loaded so that when the sun finally burst them, more pollen than usual was released at one time.

Many people who are usually unaffected by pollen, because they build up a natural resistance in more normal years, were overwhelmed by the exceptional speed at which the pollen count rose.

While the sudden soaring of the pollen count created new hay fever sufferers, many habitual snufflers had their first sneeze free summer. One suggestion is that these people are allergic to the pollen of one particular plant which, because of unusual weather conditions, did not produce much pollen.

Scientific attitudes towards women

The Science Studies Unit at the University of Edinburgh are

offering a studentship on scientific attitudes towards women.

The purpose of the studentship will be to provide an opportunity to investigate the connection between scientific discoveries and the development of the Women's Movement.

During the nineteenth century, the Women's Movement and its opponents both used and stimulated current scientific findings and opinions; especially discoveries in physiology, medicine and anthropology. Research already in progress has suggested connections between, for example the growth of statistics, the Eugenics movement, and women's rights.

The studentship, leading to a M.Sc or Ph.D, has just been postponed from this Autumn to October 1974. If you are interested in applying write to, Science Studies Unit, 34 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh.

Shocking Pain

The pain we experience in the dentist chair has always been unconsciously accepted as just retribution for lazy brushing and too many sweets, but at last significant changes are appearing on the dental horizon.

An alternative to pain killing injections has been invented. A small electric current is passed through the drill creating an anaesthetizing effect because the current blocks the nerve impulses. Patients receiving this treatment felt no pain during drilling operations which would usually have required a hefty dose of local anaesthetic.

Deep drilling may, anyway, become a thing of the past because a new filling has been developed which will permit cavities to be filled without the deep footholds required by the amalgam now used.

Fillings, drills and even dentists may become obsolete if trials of a new durable plastic teeth covering are successful. The plastic, impervious to bacterial acids, is applied to protect the vulnerable surfaces of molars.

Putting baby in cold storage

The first deep frozen bull has been born. It was removed from its mother's uterus on the tenth day of pregnancy and deep frozen for six days. It was then thawed slowly and transplanted into another mother.

The development is the next logical step after artificial insemination. With artificial insemination the cattle breeder could choose

desirable genes by taking sperm from virtually any bull in the world, but was stuck with her own cow's genes. Once this technique has been perfected, she can choose both hereditary parents and have the embryo implanted in her own cow.

The impetus behind the research is commercial. Entire herds could be transplanted round the world in flasks of liquid nitrogen which avoided the danger of spreading disease.

Productivity could be increased by providing cows with twins, and milk cows could be implanted with more profitable beef cows.

How long will it be before we have embryo banks as well as sperm banks?

Keeping quiet

We'll soon all be leading a quieter life. The government is bringing in legislation against noise pollution, and an equivalent of the breathalyser has been invented to measure noise levels. Hopefully the unmuffled road drill, the noisy lorry and the unsilenced motor cycle will go the way of the drunken driver.

Meanwhile, over in the USA, the Federal Council of Science and Technology has been galvanized into action because they have discovered that 7 million Americans are exposed to noise levels high enough to damage hearing which is costing the country 4,000 million dollars in compensation and diminished productivity. It takes a commercial reason to get research going; a product of their concern is a noise suppressing alloy which stops noises before they start.

Research into the physical and psychological damage caused by noise has revealed that it is the noises you don't hear which cause the greatest fatigue. Infrasound - noise which is felt rather than heard - is responsible for the fatigue we feel after long journeys.

Of pigs and lemons

Instead of mutilating scores of animals, Dr. Herbert Korden used lemons for his research into what triggers off changes in cellular structure - experiments that could illustrate the origins of cancer in human beings.

Dr. Korden explains that the lemon is a non-dividing type of molecular structure the same as certain parts of the body, the liver, for example; and just as satisfactory for his experiments as animals would be.

He was awarded £1,000 from

The Boer War 1900 by Byam Shaw

For many hay fever sufferers it's been a sneeze free Summer, while other people, previously unaffected by pollen, have had serious hay fever problems



the Marshall Lord Dowding Fund for Humane Research. "I am more interested in spying on nature rather than interfering with it", remarked Dr. Korden.

More and more scientists are coming out against gratuitous cruelty to animals during experimentation, which makes the new way of testing freshly laid pipelines for dents and partial blockages all the more reprehensible.

A pig is pushed through the pipe by compressed air or water pressure. A tape recorder takes details of when the pig has to squeeze squealing through an obstructed area. Ernest-Lloyd Ltd of Bristol has produced a magnetic system for locating the pig in the pipe.

How can such a technique be accepted and written up in the *New Scientist* while scientists such as Dr. Korden are struggling to find an alternative to animal experimentation.

Music on the mind

Learning music improves children's performances in other subjects. Studies carried out in Hungary show that in schools which have intensive music programmes the pupils are 30% brighter than in schools without. Dr. Klara Kokes puts it down to 'transfer effect' - the transfer of the developments of one skill to other quite different skills. Hopefully this discovery won't lead to children being force fed music in order to improve the school's exam record.

Skidding to a halt

In an effort to cut down car accidents, scientists have been testing road surfaces. The finer the chippings used in a surface, the better the resistance of the road to skidding.

Living with the land

Dear Spare Rib,

As the only female member of an ecological research community which is in the last stage of preparation I would be extremely grateful if you could insert the following into some coming issue in the hope that ecologically-minded women will be interested enough to respond:

The Ecological Research Community, a group of people who intend to devise a varied and humane way of life according to the strict principle of ecological viability, hope that interested people will get in touch with them with the possibility of joining them upon their forty acres of marginal land. Write to Gill Gairdner Cartmel College, University of Lancaster, Lancaster.

WHERE IS THIS CHILD ?

BORN: To Kathleen Klink at St Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Hospital (and Home for Unwed Mothers) San Francisco on 12 August 1966.

NAMED: John Michael Whitely

SOLD: By San Francisco Attorney Chauncey McKeever to unknown couple for a "fee" of \$1,300.

REPOSSESSED: Immediately - no refund.

RE-SOLD: To Marin County couple for \$500 (discount - "used baby").

REPOSSESSED: No refund.

RE-SOLD: (3rd time) at age 3 months to Tony and Leila for \$500; renamed Trevor Luigi.

REPOSSESSED: (Alameda County) at age 6 months by the State of California in the person of State controlled licensed County Social Worker Carol Russ, with Judge Quayle acting as legal accomplice.

RE-SOLD: (4th time) to a Sacramento couple for \$500 and immediately adopted (for the first time) to prevent Tony and Leila from winning him back.

TOTAL PROFIT: \$2,800 (one baby).



Everyone is as usual looking at the problem from a different end. One social worker had the sensitivity to say that 'care is the worst thing that can happen to a child' and yet she has been trained to look for children who are not by today's modern standards getting adequate 'care and attention' and, when she finds those children it is her duty to do something about it. Her alternatives might be between leaving an 11 year old girl in the house of a man who has sexually assaulted her and putting that child into the sterile atmosphere of a home. Who is to say which course of action will in the end be more damaging? Dr James Robertson of the Tavistock Clinic thinks that children in care are better off gassed and likens care to 'post natal abortion', and yet most 'well-brought-up' middle class matrons would be shocked to the roots of their hair if they thought that an innocent child could be left at the mercy of a man who forced her to have sex with him. Tony Calaman of Protection Prevention swings right over in the opposite direction. He maintains that a child is better beaten than bored and that even the best foster home is no substitute for the worst natural home.

Everyone seems to agree that children should not be taken into care. The law agrees, the social workers agree and the few protectors of children's rights agree and yet today there are 200,000 children in care in England. Angela Phillips asks why.

THE 1963 ACT

Even the law is unhappy about 'Care'. Part 1 of the 1963 Children Act states that: 'It shall be the duty of every local authority to promote the welfare of children by diminishing the need to receive them or keep them in care'. This should be done by giving advice and guidance and, where necessary, help in kind or in cash. One would have thought that with this kind of support no mother need fear having her children taken away. Not so, ignorance and fear combined with insensitivity and lack of time from the authorities have deprived many children of real homes for reasons which simply don't stand up to examination.

One woman recently wrote to Protection Prevention for help because her two small children had been taken away by the authorities apparently because she had no fire guard. She wrote, 'I am heart broken over them will you please try to help me get them back, my mother is also heart broken over them and the S.S. department only let me see them every three weeks for one hour. Please help me get them back'. She got them back because she had help and support and when the social worker realised that she really

let her have them. Had she not made a fuss those children might well still be there, not because the social workers are unkind or cruel but simply because most mothers are so intimidated by authority that they simply do nothing hoping that eventually the social worker will hand they kids back. The social workers for their part are often quite unaware that the mothers want their children back.

SECTION I

Most children are taken into care under Section 1 Part One of the 1948 Act. This deals with voluntary care and is used by women who simply cannot cope anymore and want someone to take their children off their hands for a while. It is the sort of problem which only happens to women who have no recourse to nannies, au-pair girls, private nurseries, boarding school or helpful grandmothers with time on their hands. These children go into a home for a few days or weeks, or even years, sometimes their mothers just don't come back at all. If a child is taken in under Section 1 the mother has, by law, to keep in touch and to keep the local authority informed of any change of address. Under the Act she is entitled to take her children out of care at any

time. If by chance she should fail to keep in touch she is liable to a fine and the Local Authority may take her children under 2.

SECTION 2

This clause entitles the local authority to take over all parental responsibility for the children. It is applied in case of death or abandonment and only to children who are already in care under section 1. If a mother has been away for a year without keeping in contact the Social Services department will write to her last known address to tell her that they intend to keep her children under Section 2. If she agrees the matter will not go to court. If she doesn't agree and informs the department of her objections within a month of receiving the notice the matter will go to court. At this point the social workers will make out a case for keeping her children and she will have to defend herself and convince the magistrate that she has had a good reason for leaving them in care and wants to have them home, or at least to leave them in voluntary care. If she loses the case she can make applications to court at a later date or just try to convince the social worker that her situation has changed. Again vocal support is very useful, because of the ambiguity of the law and the tendency of most people to prefer to leave children at home it is not difficult to persuade the magistrate that you want to have them back. The important thing is to be positive about it.

If a mother keeps taking her children in and out of care there is a strong possibility that the authorities will attempt to 'regularise' the situation by getting them under Section 2 of the Act on the grounds that they are better off in a stable though sterile environment than they would be getting the occasional glimpse of home. So it is not advisable to treat a care centre like a boarding school.

1969 Act The Care Order
A care order is a rather more drastic action and is applied without parental permission although the parents get a chance to defend themselves in court.

This action is usually taken if children are thought to be in need of care or control. This will mean either that they have become so unruly that their parents cannot cope with them (or the court thinks they can't) or, alternatively it means that the court thinks that the parent is not capable of looking after the children. The latter was the case

when Ann's children were taken away:

Ann has three children, she was living with them in a damp derelict council house. Her husband had recently left her, or rather he kept leaving her and then coming back so she was having a hard time persuading the Social Security that she needed money. The first time her children went into care she had left them with the people who were staying in her house while she went away for a couple of days to try and find her missing husband. When she got home the children had been taken away. It turned out that her 'baby sitters' had rung the local authorities because one of the children had contracted measles and they didn't feel able to cope. Ann got her children back that time but the authorities were now aware of her and she found herself being hassled by SS snoopers coming to see if the children were alright. After about a month the general stress of too little money, bad housing and no support from friends or husband got to be too much so she told her social worker that she couldn't cope and could they please look after her children until she could find a new house. He was dubious but agreed that she needed some help. The department weren't so helpful, they just said it was her responsibility. So she staged an abandonment. She asked a friend to keep an eye on the kids while she went away and then to ring the department and say they'd been abandoned. It worked like a charm but 3 years later Ann was still trying to get them out of care. She was told: get a house and you can have your children back. The housing department said, 'You aren't a family we can't rehouse you'. When she got a new boyfriend they criticised him for being too young and not a good father figure. Since then she has had another baby and found a place to live, she hopes this time she'll be able to have her children back.

Had Ann had more knowledge of the law and her own rights she may have been able to avoid losing her children. Her big mistake was to have 'abandoned them' and left herself open to punishment by the authorities. She could have done any one of the following things:

1) Asked a friend to look after her children while she went away for a while, or sent the children to stay with a friend. The local authorities are empowered to pay for this in the same way that they would pay a foster mother. It costs £35 to keep a child in residential care

and every mother should insist on her right to at least some of that money to keep the children at home (quote 1963 Act Part 1 Section 1).

2) If no friend or relation was available she might have persuaded her social worker to get her children into emergency day care. That might have been sufficient and if it wasn't she would have found it easier to get someone to baby sit or take the children in for the evenings.

3) If the last two seemed impossible and care appeared to be the only possibility she would have been better off to have gone, preferably with support, to the local social security department and just left the children there. That would not have been abandoning them and they would have been taken in on a voluntary basis.

When Ann's children were first in care she went to see them regularly. She found them living with a woman who kept them in the kitchen and bathroom and didn't allow them into the rest of the house. They weren't allowed to touch things and she could see that they were frustrated and repressed. At this point Ann started to try and get them back. 'I thought I was inadequate as a mother but this was far worse' she told me. She didn't get the children back but they were transferred to another foster home. As time went on and a new baby was born, visits to the children got less frequent. Ann couldn't bear to see them and not take them home with her and she felt that her visits disturbed them. To add to her problems she was now living in London while her children were in Devon and she couldn't afford the train fare to see them very often.

Again a better knowledge of the law would have helped here. A parent is entitled to extra benefit to cover the cost of train fares to see a child in care. It is also worth remembering that the council are likely to look more favourably on an application to take the children out of care if the parents have kept up pretty good contacts with the children. The longer they stay in care the more difficult it would be to get them out.

The law is, theoretically, on your side.

The most important thing to remember in any dealing with the authorities over children is that the law is, theoretically, on your side. The department is bound to do all in its power to keep your family together. A social worker from London gave the following examples of what

is possible:

If a mother has to go into hospital for a short time we will try and help find friends, neighbours or relations to look after the children. If the care seems adequate they can be paid as foster parents. If a husband or other man is around we will try to persuade him to take time off work, if necessary we can pay him. In cases of desperate need we can pay a man the equivalent of what he would get at work.

If a mother is under stress it may be possible to arrange a home help for a time (this is means tested). Some authorities keep a list of daily minders. In extreme cases it may be possible to find recuperative placements for mothers and children.

All these forms of assistance are available but in extremely short supply. This same social worker went on to say, 'Very long day care is urgently required with more flexible hours so that children can sleep at home but be cared for during the day. I think people should be more militant about it.' We would heartily endorse that. Women need help with their children, it is not enough for a few well meaning militants to shout 'Do away with CARE'. We need alternatives, it is not enough to do what seems best for the children, their mothers need help as well and there is little to be gained by refusing to take children into care from a woman who is going mad with tension and worry. Healthy mothers will have healthy children and what we need is mothers' relief. The first step towards this is for mothers to stop feeling guilty. Every woman hates her kids some of the time. If someone takes them away and you want them back, fight, don't think that anyone knows better than you or that you are inadequate. If on the other hand they are driving you nuts don't wait until you are forced to break the law and get them taken into care under a care order, demand help - you are entitled to it. If you need assistance try contacting the following organisations. Protection Prevention, 01-603 5885, 7a Sinclair Gdns, Shepherds Bush Childrens Rights Workshop, 01-703 7217, 73 Balfour St, London S.E.17

Next month I will be covering Care Orders from the point of view of children. Children don't in fact have any rights but if you are under 18 it is worth knowing the ways in which you are likely to come to the notice of the authorities.

THE FEMALE STUDIES AS JOKE SYNDROME

I'D LIKE TO STUDY SOME FEMALES MYSELF HO HO



Photograph of Marie Moyer by Bruce Rae

***Why should women's studies
be so controversial?
Marie Moyer writes about how and why
the courses have been started
in American universities.***

*"It would be preposterously naive to suggest that a B.A.
can be made as attractive to girls as a marriage license."*

Dr. Grayson Kirk (former President, Columbia University)

Four years ago when many young American men were being drafted into the army, Nathan Pusey - then President of Harvard University - lamented that if the Viet Nam war went on much longer, the universities would be left with only "the blind, the lame and the women." Few university presidents would dare to make such a chauvinistic statement today, but Pusey's unselfconscious words reflected the attitudes which permeated not only Harvard but most other American universities as well.

While it may not be surprising that women's second class status in society is mirrored in the academic community, what is surprising is that their position has been going from bad to worse: The proportion of female postgraduate students has declined since 1930. In 1870, women made up one-third of the faculty in American universities -

in 1970, they were less than one-quarter. In the prestigious universities, they are almost invisible.

The discriminatory barriers that women face may be debilitating, and of course must be attacked, but most feminists now realise that equal opportunity alone – the assimilation of more women into universities as they now exist – is not enough. There is a growing realisation that education must also confront the internal constraints and conflicts that women students feel as a result of their upbringing and position in society. This requires an analysis of the inadequacies of the education that women students in fact receive in most universities. This analysis forms part of the focus of what has become known as Women's Studies.

Less than a decade ago the very idea of women's studies would have been laughed out of court. Today there are more than 1200 different women's studies courses being taught at over 400 universities in the US. Sixty-one universities now have complete multidisciplinary programmes of women's studies, six of which grant BA's in women's studies and three an MA degree. Similar courses have sprung up in local communities and adult education centres, and there are increasing numbers of courses in primary and secondary schools. Although many of the courses are in the humanities – the traditional province of female study – there is growing activity in other disciplines, especially in the social sciences. While many new courses have been created from scratch, many others have incorporated new material on women.

Staff get fired

The largest number of courses have been started because staff wanted to teach women's studies, and much of this impetus came in turn from the women's movement. The way forward has not been without difficulties. Some women have lost their jobs over women's studies, it is often difficult to get funds, and some departments and universities have been slow to accept – much less welcome – a development which threatens the traditional approach to learning. In some cases, coalitions of students, staff and other workers in the academic community have established women's centres or free universities, which offer courses that later become integrated into the formal curricula.

Why is it that the enthusiasm for women's studies has grown so quickly? What needs in women students do the new courses respond to? The following thoughts expressed by American students give some idea:

"To me – and this really worries me – the opposite of 'feminine' is 'intellectual.'"

"I've had some really emotional things going on inside of me, but I always feel like I have no business saying anything unless I can really back it up."

"Nobody talked in my classes at college. Most of the women never challenged the professor. He was some sort of paternal father figure up there. You could ask him to rephrase or clarify something, but nobody ever said, 'That's absurd.'"

"At college, it seemed to me that whenever you were in a class and a girl made a point, you didn't really care much about what she was saying. I don't know if it was because she was a girl, or because the teacher was usually a man and you're more interested in what he had to say."

"Another double bind. In college you had to live up to an intellectual image but live down the negative aspects of that image. In other words, you must be clever and bright, but not intellectually aggressive or dully bookwormish; you must be knowledgeable, but not studious; you must be serious, but attractive, , seductive . . . you must be intellectually assertive (in class) and play dumb (with men). You had to be ambitious and self-advancing, but also supportive and submissive. You had to know when to speak up and when to shut up and never get mixed up (the penalties for misjudging situations were severe: if you shut up in class, you'd get a lousy grade and if you spoke up on a date he'd never ask you out again – both major failures)."

"I feel like the administration and the staff think that being a woman is something you are supposed to overcome. The expectations that they've placed on me are totally unrealistic . . . They've told me that the world is

my oyster and yet I feel unhappy being in the dorm and not being with a man . . . They tell me I'm supposed to go on to graduate school, but I feel like I'm being prepared to be a good conversationalist or make someone a good wife."

"There was an obsession that prevailed each time I got involved with a new man; he was my Saviour who would take me out of my all-girl cloister and save my mind and soul. I don't think that I ever felt capable of having a full, creative life on my own without having something accrue to me vicariously through a man."

"Rarely did we venture a differing opinion, fearing to be found wrong. We only felt confident in our ability to read extensively, digest the various facts and ideas, and organise them into lengthy, well-documented essays. . . we all accepted the authority of the professors and books much too easily, but we didn't have the confidence to trust ourselves. We continued to be passive recipients just as we had been raised to be."

These students were articulating concerns and tensions which until recently have been almost completely ignored by universities which tend to treat all students as disembodied intellects. The universities have also totally ignored the key issue now being raised against the educational establishment by feminist critics. These critics argue powerfully that women students' intellectual growth is often severely crippled by deep-lying inhibitions and restraints which result from their upbringing and continued socialisation in an environment dominated by male values.

As one women's studies teacher noted:

"We have hitherto grossly underestimated the damaging impact of sexist indoctrination on the intellectual functioning of women. We have blithely assumed that because we send boys and girls into the same classrooms and present them with the same materials for learning, that their learning will proceed along the same lines. We have been . . . blind to the subtle effects on performance of discrimination against women . . . and have assumed that equality of opportunity was sufficient . . . disregarding the heritage of injury to self-esteem and the stress of conflicting demands made by the girl upon herself and by society upon the girl."

What are these conflicting demands and how are they detrimental to women's education? An increasing number of studies demonstrate that women are conditioned from birth into acceptance of the inferior intellectual as well as social status ascribed to them by men. Women rapidly learn that it is a man's world, peripherally served by women. Women don't do exciting and creative things – their function is to be supportive, altruistic and self-sacrificing so that men can do them. This lesson is learned early, as the following anecdote illustrates:

"Last summer . . . my sister was accepted into medical school. Naturally, there were congratulations and comments from friends and family. After a few days of this, she found her son (age 6) and her daughter (age 5) crying for no apparent reason. When she at last got to the cause of their grief, she found that they thought, if she were going to become a doctor, that she would first have to turn into a man and they wouldn't have a mother."

Not surprisingly, women come to undervalue their own abilities. Their insecurity means they often fear taking on responsibility and lack the confidence to express themselves in public. To be feminine is to be dependent on men, submissive, passive, to please, to be co-operative – not exactly the qualities that inspire critical thinking. Women not only find it difficult to criticise others openly, they also fear being attacked themselves – they have been conditioned all their lives to repress and avoid conflict.

Women are thus offered a choice between the traditional womanly life or male goals, and to strive for those male goals can have dire consequences – unaccepted by men, resented or considered elitist by other women, achievement can mean isolation. It is thus hardly surprising that Matina Horner, psychologist and President of Radcliffe College, found that women worry about success as well as failure. Most women's studies teachers believe that women students must come to terms with these problems or efforts to liberate the intellect will be futile.

Students threatened

It is perhaps not surprising that co-educational colleges should have failed to deal with these internal constraints.

More surprising is the manifest failure of the women's colleges, which were in many instances founded by 19th century feminists. To understand this failure, it is necessary to grasp what the feminists in the 19th century were up against. Essentially they were challenging the then generally held assumption that women were biologically and naturally unsuited to a life of the intellect. To prove their point, the education that women received had to be exactly the same as that received by men – otherwise it would not be comparable. Choosing this path, however, meant falling into the 'let's not admit that we're special because then we'll be seen as inferior' trap. This approach, which has characterised the women's colleges to the present day, failed on two counts. Firstly it totally disregarded the internal constraints, and secondly, it meant that the male-oriented education women received reflected all the biases of the patriarchal society it was designed to serve. To imitate male education as a reaction against the earlier 'feminine'/domestic science approach to educating women, was to jump from the frying pan into the fire. Most of today's feminists feel that since there is an overlapping of male and female in all individuals, what is needed ultimately is a rich and flexible course of study that encompasses all of human experience (as opposed to male experience) and a learning environment that takes into account the different social experience of both sexes. But since the academic establishment views the world from an essentially male perspective, one of the major tasks of women's studies must be to redress the balance.

"Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth."

Simone de Beauvoir

"Women are all anthropologists – we're always studying a foreign culture."

Kate Millett

"...Men . . . are now writing only with the male side of their brains. It is a mistake for a woman to read them, for she will inevitably look for something that she will not find . . . Do what she will a woman cannot find in them that fountain of perpetual life which the critics assure her is there. It is not only that they celebrate male virtues, enforce male values and describe the world of men; it is that the emotion with which these books are permeated is to a woman incomprehensible."

Virginia Woolf

The female Experience

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 19th century American feminist and writer, once noted that 'men are men and human beings – women are only women.' College curricula by and large reflect this assumption. Men's activities are accorded high status and are thus taken seriously. Subjects associated with women have long been trivialised. If women see themselves reflected in history or literature at all, it is usually through male eyes. As Shulamith Firestone points out in *Dialectic of Sex*, 'Culture is so saturated with male bias that women almost never have a chance to see themselves culturally through their own eyes. There exists a wholly different reality for men and women . . . The sex role system divides human experience; men and women live in these different halves of reality, and culture reflects this.' It is for these reasons that women involved in women's studies argue that to achieve balance in academic disciplines, teaching must incorporate the neglected half of human experience – the female experience – into the body of culture.

Literature, my own field at university, provides a good example of how women's studies may attempt to achieve this aim in practice. Despite the fact that women staff are relatively well represented in literature departments, gross biases exist. For example, in the English department of one woman's college, the courses offered one year included 313 male writers and 17 women writers; in another, less than 7% of the novels read were by women. Many women writers have been neglected or forgotten, deemed insignificant by male critics because they wrote of female experience. These writers are now being rediscovered. Many other women have taken refuge in diaries, letters

and journals, rather than fight the enormous odds involved in pursuing a literary career as a woman. Therefore, we must read not only work of literary repute, but the writing of 'ordinary' women as well. We must examine women in the arts both as artists and subjects, analysing how the arts reflect or criticise dominant social patterns as we look at the way women are depicted.

In history, as in many other fields, women students subconsciously pick up the message that women have made no political, intellectual or economic contribution to society. One popular first-year history anthology titled *Representative Men: Cult Heroes of Our Time* discusses 33 men and 2 women. The men represent a broad range of achievements; the two women are Elizabeth Taylor, a sex symbol and movie idol, and Jacqueline Onassis, defined largely in terms of the men she married. However, we should not be content to simply rediscover those isolated women who made contributions to an essentially male-oriented culture or those women who struggled to win 'equality' in a male-dominated society. 'We must understand that women were *not only* oppressed. They lived and functioned and created history, but they created it *differently* from men . . . women's collective past constitutes actually a different culture.'

But to find this data is often difficult if not impossible, since so few historians have asked questions about women's history and collected materials. This difficulty in finding information can in itself help students to see the subtle bias that affects knowledge and learning.

The social sciences, which are even more dominated by men than the arts, have come in for stringent criticism. Functionalist sociology, for example, can now add women to its lengthy list of detractors. In this so-called value-free, objective theory, the *functions* of the family and the analysis of the various subordinate roles played by women are treated in such a way that what is in fact *convenient* for men emerges as *necessary* for the smooth functioning of society as a whole. Social science thus becomes a legitimising rationalisation for a male-dominated status quo.

Although many women's studies courses initially focused on male images of women in society and on challenging male critics and other experts, there has more recently been a move towards studying women's issues as *they* rather than men perceive them. This has given rise to such woman-centred courses as: Evolution of the Female Personality, Philosophical Issues of Contemporary Feminism, Women and the Welfare System, Ecology and the Women's Movement, The Woman Intellectual, Poetry and the Female Consciousness. Bringing a new perspective to bear on established disciplines means that students in women's studies see the social world quite differently. They are encouraged to ask questions which previously would simply have not arisen, to question basic values and conventional wisdoms. For these reasons, students get from women's studies a real feeling of discovery and testify to the extraordinary degree of learning that takes place. It avoids needless specialisation and emphasises an intellectual approach that organises around a set of problems which transcend existing disciplines. In this respect, women's studies reflects the concerns of many others interested in providing radical alternatives to current educational practice.

Bridging the gulf

Women's studies differs not only in its orientation to *what* is taught, but also to *how* it is taught. The majority of women's studies teachers believe that what happens in the classroom ought itself to reflect, exemplify and test the feminist principles being taught. The way we receive information should reinforce in *form* what is being taught in *content*. Another way to put it is to say that values are transmitted as much – if not more – through the structure of the learning situation as through its content, which is constantly changing and often quickly forgotten. The dynamics of the classroom can either reinforce insecurity and passivity, or, as is the case with women's studies, there can be an effort to find ways to help students overcome those aspects of conditioning that interfere with learning.

There is no such thing as a typical women's studies classroom, but there are certain characteristics which most of these new learning environments seem to share. Of most importance, perhaps, is the emphasis on building a community through collective work, on sharing knowledge and skills, unlike the traditional classroom where individual competition is frequently maximised. Implicit in collective study and action is the development of each woman's strengths and potential; responsibility is shared, decisions are made by consensus. Learning depends on an atmosphere of more intimacy, trust and openness than conventional classes usually permit – an atmosphere that is supportive both intellectually and emotionally. Here, one can

criticise and be criticised without it being threatening. The class uses the ideas and experiences of the group and of women writers, as resources, students feeling free to reflect on personal experience when relevant to a point being discussed.

Indeed, one of the most exciting aspects of women's studies has been its attempts to help heal the disjunction between self-knowledge and objective knowledge, between the emotional and the intellectual. Women have discovered that there is a gulf between many male theorists' descriptions of the world and their own experience of it. They feel that tough-minded male 'objectivity' and impersonality often masks a basic lack of concern for human needs. Most subject matter is abstracted and divorced from feelings and also from possibilities of action.

One question which will continue to provoke much discussion is how much feminist aims in education can be realised in traditional universities given the challenges they pose and the vested interests aligned against them. These very real problems should not be minimised, but neither should they be used as an excuse for inaction, for there is much that can be done. Teachers can play down their traditional authority role, acting more as clarifiers, interpreters and resource people. Teacher/taught, authority/friend have fluid definitions that apply to each person at some time. The student, for example, is a greater authority on her own feelings than the teacher. Consciousness raising techniques such as student diaries and journals, group projects, informal class meetings, having meals together before class, sitting in a circle on the floor, or having everyone comment on a question in turn can all be very effective. Some classes have tried research or field work in the community or communal living to make their women's studies experience more intense.

By and large, the response to women's studies has been one of profound involvement and enthusiasm. Many students and staff become radicalised and get involved in political activity; some get divorced, many others develop new conceptions of relationships with men and women. Most change their ideas about life styles and goals to a greater or lesser degree. Finally, many women enjoy - often for the first time - thinking, working and being together as women. As one woman expressed it, 'Our whole lives are brought to the classroom, and what happens there is taken into our worlds'.

Surprise failure

Overt conflict is especially alarming to those conditioned to repress it. Students can feel threatened and defensive doing analysis of sex-role patterns that they are not entirely ready to abandon. They can become depressed and angered by the weight of historical evidence of women's subjection and the continuing proof of its existence in the outside world. To channel this anger constructively can be a real challenge. Some women students, having rejected the conventional feminine choices, feel that more is required of them, but fear they will prove inadequate to meet the new challenges. They feel they can be taken seriously only on the basis of accomplishment, worry that they can never accomplish enough, and therefore sometimes opt out before even engaging in the struggle.

Male students, especially in large numbers, can often have a very negative effect. They may be defensive, hostile, reinforce competition and resistance, or simply opt for ridicule (The-Female-Studies-as-

Joke syndrome: 'I'd like to study some females myself - ho!ho!'). The reversal of the social norms in a women's studies classroom can set up defensive behaviours which make communication difficult - some men come to feel self-conscious, awkward, insignificant and stupid (an experience not unfamiliar to most women). Male students are often less willing to become involved with the material other than intellectually and at an abstract level.

The problems of involving men in women's studies will continue to provoke controversy, as will many other issues which are beyond the scope of this article. There is no sign that these controversies are anywhere near resolution, but they generate light as well as heat, forcing women to consider the wider implications of what they are - or are not - doing. The energy generated by women's studies courses has been great and by no means confined to the classroom or the campus. Women's studies courses in local communities, child care centres and a whole variety of feminist political activities have been part of the spin-off.

In the few years it has been in existence, women's studies has had an enormous impact on the universities as well as on individual students - it is based on, and responds to, deeply felt needs which women experience, and not some passing radical fashion. As one student put it, 'Every day is women's studies'.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Feminist Press, SUNY College at Old Westbury, Box 334, Old Westbury, New York, 11568. Publishes Women's Studies Newsletter; reprints of works by women; biographies of women; children's books; a guide to current women's studies courses; and collections of essays about women's studies (including feminist criticism).

KNOW, Inc., P.O. Box 86031, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15221. Publishes reprints of feminist articles; Monthly News Bulletin; collections of essays about teaching women's studies; course designs, syllabi, reading lists, programmes; bibliography of the year's research on women, including directory of women's organisations, action projects and communication outlets (compiled by Barnard Women's Center).

Cambridge-Goddard Feminist Studies Program, 1878 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02140. They have compiled extensive bibliographies of women writers (WOMEN AND LITERATURE) and of PSYCHOLOGY AND WOMEN.

WOMEN'S STUDIES: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL, Ed. Wendy Martin, Queens College, New York. Subscriptions or information from: Gordon & Breach Science Publishers Ltd., 42 William IV Street, London, WC 2.

A step in the direction of academic legitimacy for women's studies, the journal's purpose is to present scholarship and criticism about women in all fields, as well as poetry, short fiction, film and book reviews. The first issue contains poetry, several articles on literature, "A Review of Sexism in American Historical Writing," "An Evolutionary Perspective on the Feminine Role," and an article on women's education in Britain in the 19th century.

Continued from page 4

his study to get something. I glanced at his desk and saw that he had been writing a long, romantic letter to some girl he'd met on a demonstration or something. I went into a blind rage. I snatched the letter off the typewriter and ran into the kitchen. 'So this is what you spend your time doing while I slave in the kitchen, you bastard, you pig.' He had the time and energy to make other relationships, but that in order to do anything that he wanted to do, parties, politics, relationships, I had to be sacrificed. Because of our kids I'm not free to do any of those things, and when I do have time I'm too tired and depressed

and too out of things to make any effort anyway. It all seems very black and white to me.

There has been very little let up for two whole days, during which David's line has been: 'Until you find something as valuable and as useful to do as I'm doing, there is no point in trying to change anything. I'm reluctant to give up any of my time unless you are going to do something equally as useful.' What he doesn't understand is that I need time free of the kids and house, time which is exclusively my own, to think, read and write in, before I can ever begin to decide what I want to do practically. I don't have either the skill or the confidence to plunge into something like he's doing.

I don't think he'll ever under stand.

A day later

David appears to have been spending the day planning out my life for me. He handed me a memo that sets out what I should be doing each moment of each day of the week. It's based on the idea that I am disorganised, and that if I planned out my days more carefully I would have a lot of time free of the kids in which to read etc. Monday morning: 9am-10am, get kids up, give kids breakfast; 10-10.30, shopping; 10.30-11.30, cleaning, washing nappies; 11.30-12.30, play with kids, take them for a walk etc; 1pm-1.30, kids lunch and put them to bed; 1.30-2.30 Read! I

could hardly believe it.

The next day

I spent yesterday in a state of confusion about that bloody memo. I was angry, being dictated to by David about how I should conduct my life, also that none of it affected him at all. But, at the same time, perhaps he is right, perhaps I could find more time to do things I wanted to do if I organised myself more sensibly and made more efforts. Feelings of outrage and anger kept being dispersed by feelings of self doubt and self-criticism. Then on a sudden impulse I took the memo along to my women's lib meeting and read it out to everybody. All of them without exception were horrified.

More next month.

With a little help from ourselves

'We think of patterns of behaviour as personality, but the personality is hidden beneath the pattern.'

Carol Morrell explains self-help therapy.

Re-evaluation counselling - more often called co-counselling - is perhaps the most radical of the radical therapies: it is peer group therapy. You work on what is important to you, and at your own pace. Nobody directs you or analyses what you say. This allows you to be in charge of your emotional life. You are not regarded as 'helpless'. Especially for women, taking our therapy into our own hands is the first step towards self-realization.

The theory is deceptively simple.

The theory of re-evaluation counselling, as developed over the years by its founder, Harvey Jackins, is deceptively simple. The genius of the idea is in practice more than theory. Jackins noticed, as many others have, that the functioning of society (including behaviour, roles, values) depends on the systematic and forceful repression of emotions. Take a small child. When it feels sad or happy, it expresses those feelings, usually loudly. This is the healthy thing to do; the child doesn't need to be taught that. When the emotion being expressed is anger or fear or tears, it is immediately cut off by the parent. The adult was stopped too, as a child: the sound of her own child crying reminds her how painful it was to stop crying herself. She is 're-stimulated' and must stop that noise: and she must repeat

the way she was brought up to behave.

'Shush shush darling, don't cry', or 'Boys don't take on so. You're a little man now': familiar comments. The child soon learns to apply that outer restraint to itself, stops shouting and crying, and we say 'how grown up he/she is getting', admiringly.

But with the stifling of feeling goes the inability to function well, perhaps even to think. If a child is allowed to express its fear, until it spontaneously stops shaking and perspiring, the immediate result is a happy smile and renewed interest in the world around. The situation has been coped with in a healthy way. The next time a fearful situation arises, the child will again experience being afraid. But it will not experience being afraid for the last event and the time before that, on top of the present fear. The surest way to train up a child into a fearful adult is to refuse to let it express feelings of fear.

We never do anything new.

Emotions, if not expressed, gradually tighten inside until we *cannot* express them. Worse, the events that produce emotion still occur, have a tendency to set off the same sort of emotion, which adds to the original feelings, the whole mass of which becomes more and more tightly repressed. So we can keep functioning. But now, as a result of

repressing 'undesirable' feelings, we function in a highly patterned, unintelligent manner. We never do anything new. Instead of responding to a situation, or a person, we avoid what is likely to be emotion-producing or act in a repetitive way. In order to cope. All the time. Noticing these patterns in other people is easy, once you adjust your vision that way. We often say, 'That's her way' or 'I know what his response to that would be': we think of patterns of behaviour as personality, but the personality, the individuality, is hidden beneath the pattern. It's much less easy to see what our own patterns are, because part of the necessity to stop up emotion includes the necessity to not know, consciously, what troubles us or how we put the feelings out of sight. We just do it, repetitively, machine-like.

The theory continues on to suggest that the only way to end senseless and repetitive behaviour is to get in touch with those painful feelings, to find out what causes them, and to 'discharge' or express them in a supportive context. The context is first the group, then a counselling partner. We will avoid facing alone the accumulation of pain and anger we all carry around, fearing that if the barriers are let down, heaven knows what will surge up, or for how long. Re-evaluation counsellors believe that once a certain amount of this hidden emotion is

expressed, and some of the causes and results are understood, a 'mental clearing' happens which enables us to begin to break unwanted patterns and to function in more self-fulfilling ways.

Counselling is not a short term therapy.

To co-counsel effectively, various skills must be acquired. Usually, a group of people meet with an RC teacher for a period of 40 hours, spread out over perhaps two months. Between group meetings, people get together in pairs to practise what they've learned. Finally, you meet your partner once a week to carry on. Counselling is thought of not as a short term therapy, but as an ongoing process through which we can become more conscious, more independent, more free from patterned behaviour.

There are many techniques, none of which are difficult to learn. I'll mention three that are especially relevant to women's self-realization process. First, new counsellors are asked to build up a new habit of thought, by remembering what's been good and new in the past few days. Many women, when asked this, really can't think of a single good incident. By noticing things that are good and pleasurable, we can break the depressed habit of being conscious only of what's wrong. Another important technique to learn is 'free attention'. We all do a lot of listening, but how valuable is it? In co-counselling, you learn to listen with all your attention, not planning responses before the speaker has finished, not groping around, while she's talking, for helpful advice to give. While we're doing all that, we're not listening. Not judging,

commenting, sympathizing, or giving advice means that your partner has a 'free space' in which she can hear herself, and come to her own conclusions. Which are the only valuable conclusions anyway.

A third technique is 'self-validation'. This means liking yourself, and appreciating openly what you like best about yourself. One of the most pernicious ways in which women are kept from developing their individual potential is the subtle invalidation we receive daily. Just as harmful, is being appreciated for all the wrong reasons; for instance, being told how marvellously well we fulfil roles we haven't really chosen and don't especially like ourselves in. One woman was always told, 'What a good listener you are'. Fine, except she often wanted those ego-tripping people to stop and listen to her once in a while. Better, she wanted more about her to be appreciated than her ears and ability to sit patiently still for hours. Her self-validation and direction for future is, 'You've got an hour to talk, because I like you. Then we do what I want'.

Change is a slow process.

Change is a slow process, perhaps because we can't know what end result we want when we begin. We have an idea, but it will be modified in time. So we vacillate, go back on our best intentions, then take a couple of important steps forward, only to sidetrack once again. It's useless to expect society or ourselves to pursue a straight line to a pre-determined goal: that's not an organic process. Change is better seen as the unfolding of real individual potential; and

discovery, as the potential becomes apparent, of what we want it to accomplish in our lives. Re-evaluation counselling's most important premise is that *we* can achieve that realization and put it to our own best use.

Information.

Two women's co-counselling groups have been trained. You can form your own group first, then contact John Heron to find a teacher in your area.

For literature about co-counselling, and information about groups beginning in your area, write to John Heron, Re-evaluation Counselling Headquarters, 40 Denzil Road, Guildford, Surrey.



Photograph of Carol Morrell by Bruce Rae



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So he gave me money
Fingered and crumpled
Between the honey and the bread
Cheer up sweetie
You could be dead
And went away
Busy.

J. Bradshaw

MADAME BUTTERFLY TURNS HORNET

Scarlet Maid, Lady Whirlwind and Black Butterfly are all fighting heroines of Eastern 'Westerns'. Made in Hong Kong, these films are seen by vast audiences throughout Asia, play to packed cinemas in Chinese colonies across the world and are now promising to become cult films in the West.

The films contain so much violence that they make spaghetti Westerns look like *Love Story*. They specialise in impossible, beautifully choreographed fights with sword or fist in which the hero single handedly subdues literally dozens of bullying baddies. Incredibly, in over half of these Eastern 'Westerns', the hero is a heroine.

Women fighters have been part of Chinese literary tradition since about the ninth century. Despite such respectable roots, my own reaction when I heard about these films was disapproving. The last thing I want to see is women adopting the violent behaviour associated with the male role, either on or

off the screen. Moreover, cowboys bore me (with the odd brilliant exception) and violent films (with no exception) frighten me.

So it was with great misgivings that I agreed to see *Lady Whirlwind* and *The Invincible Eight*. The films radically altered my views about violence on the screen; not because of their content, but because of their effect on me.

Their plots are pure cowboy corniness. The opening sequences of *Lady Whirlwind* show a beautiful, petite woman walking demurely into a gambling den. With complete self assurance she repeatedly scoops the board. With her winnings in her neat, black handbag, she turns to leave and is confronted by the leering bouncer. Without batting an eyelid she accepts the challenge and is soon engaged in hand to hand fighting with him and his den full of

cronies. Boxing, leaping and chopping, she floors them all and leaves the den with men fleeing before in all directions.

It's a typical scene. The women emerge from nowhere; cool, competent and victorious in the face of impossible odds. Reality, rationality and the story line play secondary roles in the films; the plot weaves a vague thread between fights. The goodies triumph over the baddies who are as stereotyped as the moustachioed villains of silent films. Their henchmen, invincible Japanese Karate experts, leave a trail of bodies in their wake every time they climb down from their wooden wedgies - until they meet the women fighters.

The women are Robin Hood figures, intent on righting wrongs and usually motivated by revenge. The heroines of the *Invincible Eight*



are determined to revenge their fathers, and Lady Whirlwind hunts down her sister's killer.

It's revealing to compare the swordswomen films to the only cowboy film I know of with women in the leading active roles - *Johnny Guitar* with Joan Crawford and Mercedes Macambridge. Mercedes is intent on having Joan hung for the murder of her brother. However, Western culture cannot accept that a woman could be motivated to direct action purely by unselfish revenge. And so it is carefully insinuated that the women are rivals for the attentions of the Dancing Kid. The Chinese women fighters, on the other hand, are asexual, and all the romantic interest in the films is centred in women who never step outside the feminine stereotype; gentle, supportive women who co-exist with the fighting females.

Western film-makers find it equally inconceivable that men and women should be seen 'honourably' fighting each other. At the final shoot out in *Johnny Guitar* the sheriff turns to his posse saying 'put up your guns fellas, it's their fight'.

Throughout *Johnny Guitar* we are given the impression that active/aggressive women inevitably come to a bad and lonely end; Joan Crawford will only find happiness when she abandons her independence to Johnny Guitar. In the Eastern Westerns however, the women fighters are aggressive to the triumphant end. There is complete film role reversal. Lady Whirlwind is stronger and more self reliant than her male enemy, repeatedly saving him from his enemies so that she can kill him herself.

Unlike the wronged woman in Western films, the Chinese women fighters never revert to guile. Western women are only permitted revenge by dishonourable, underhand means while the Chinese heroines meet their enemies face to face and win through their singlemindedness and the technical brilliance of their fighting. They are the ones who walk off, victorious into the sunset.

It was only after I left the cinema that I became aware of the effect these films had had on me. For the first time I was able to identify with the violent, dominant character; a role usually reserved for men. Identifying, I was filled with a feeling of potential power, capable of throwing my six foot companion across the street.

As children, girls play Cowboys and Indians along with the boys. But, with the feminising process they lay down their guns. Taught to repress and avoid conflict, we often see ourselves in movies as the victim but rarely, if ever, the attacker.

To see the Chinese women fighter films is to experience the kind of indoctrination a man receives practically every time he goes to a movie - the real danger and the draw, inherent in violent films, becomes clear.

It is believed that films starring women fighters will make poor box office. (*Modesty Blaise* didn't live up to expectations when she toured). Therefore Eastern "Westerns" with men fighters are being distributed ahead of *Lady Whirlwind* and *Hapkido* to, so to speak, pave the way. *Hapkido* (which I haven't seen yet) will be out soon, before *Lady Whirlwind* who is still under the censors scissors. The *Hapkido* press release is quite an achievement; the story is summarised without one mention of the hero's sex.



Angela Mao in *Lady Whirlwind*



Angela Mao in *Hapkido*

Exhibitions in new shapes and sizes

Two exhibitions, one past and one to come, illustrate how women are changing the face of art shows and breathing some life into the events.

Sue Madden

Sue Madden placed the following notice in the Womens Liberation Workshop Newsletter: 'Woman's Art Exhibition. I'm a third year student at Camberwell Arts School, and this is my diploma show. It would be a great opportunity for me to discuss and show my work to other women. It would make so much difference to what I've been doing to hear what you think.'

She must be the first person to issue such an invitation to her own diploma show. The circumstances which prompted her to do it arose from her situation as a woman making art about women's experiences in an art school which wasn't ready for it.

The extent of her isolation was obvious to anyone visiting the diploma show. While the rest of the show consisted of dull, competent paintings, Sue exhibited her constructed environments. One, a bright pink Wendy house, incorporated a whole variety of objects and texts, from toys, to pages out of love mags, and quotations from feminist writers.

The house had four very different entrances, each reflecting an image of women concocted by the media; housewife, bride, whore and little girl. It underlined the pressure we feel to conform to one of these roles — to enter by one of the doorways.

Inside the house were three figures illustrating the stereotypes. Sue made them all out of the same pink cardboard to symbolize our basic similarities. She then stuck a collage of images from the media onto the cardboard to demonstrate how the roles are imposed upon us from without, creating artificial divisions between us.

Her other construction, less overtly feminist, was a large all-white 'dream' box hung with muslin, white paper birds, leaves and hands. In one corner a night light burned, and in the centre stood a solitary milk bottle. Sue commented, 'the two environments were different in that the wendy house illustrates how society sees women, whereas the white box is more personal, and to do with my own dreams and fantasies. I think it is important that the two sides of my work should co-exist.'

Visitor's interpretations of the environments varied. Some felt threatened by the white construction claiming that it was glorifying the idea of woman as pure, virginal and mystical, while others saw their own childhood fantasies incorporated within it. Everyone could identify with it in some way — which is what Sue hoped would happen.



Angela Mao in Hapkido



Angela Mao in Hapkido



Sue. I've always tried to work as personally as possible. I think it is the only way to make honest statements. And, from Woman's Liberation, I knew that it would relate in some way to other women. Art is just something I've used to externalise feelings and to communicate with other people - making marks about my life to demonstrate physically how I feel about things.

I find it very hard to work personally

unless there are one or two people around. Last year I had a close friend here, but she was kicked out. Having her around made such a difference. It seemed rather negative and destructive to try and be personal when no-one was picking it up or recognising it.

Were there no other women in your year?

Sue. Eight women friends of mine who were doing different and interesting work left during the first two years. Out of the nineteen people in my year only three girls stayed until the end.

Why did so many of them leave?

Sue. There were a number of reasons. I think one reason was that they came here expecting to find men doing the interesting work, but instead they were ones whose work was exciting and inventive, and they couldn't see themselves as the leaders.

Another reason was that there is not a single woman tutor for women students to identify with. And, even though there are women in the Art History Department, we were given no seminars on women in the arts.

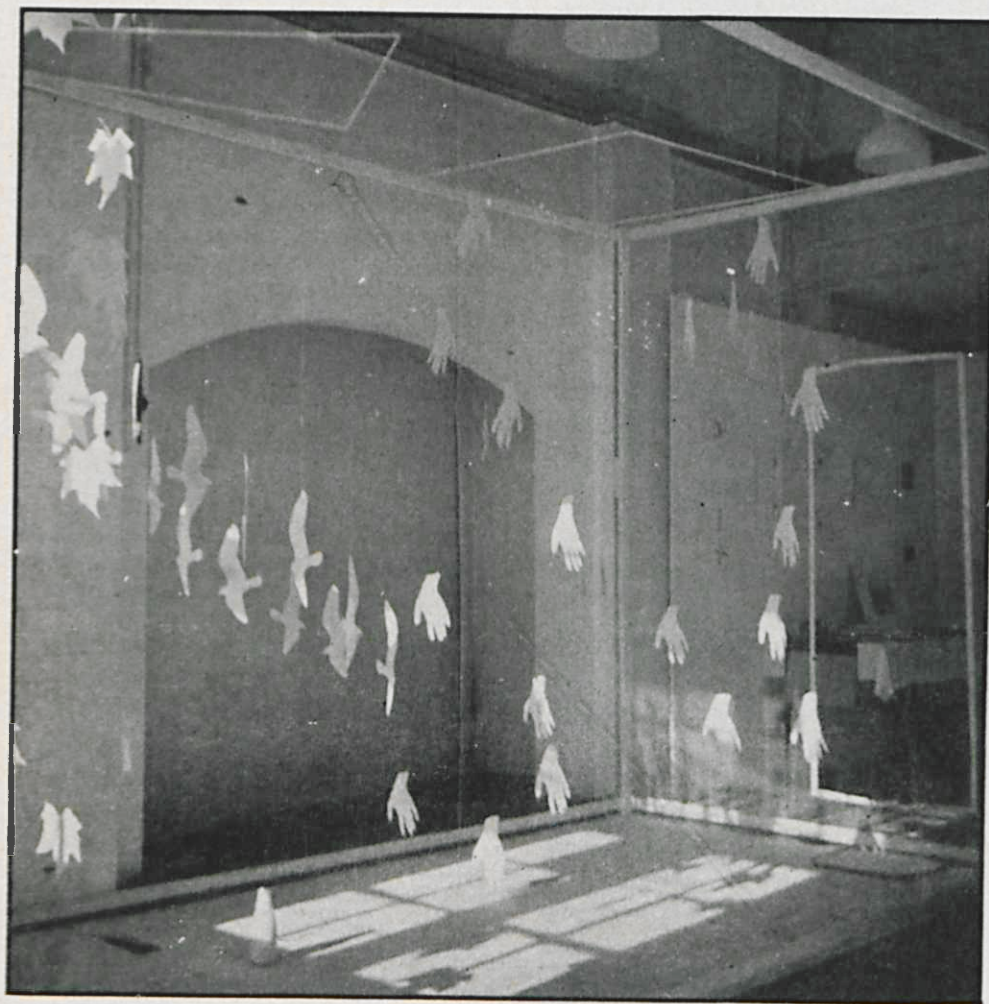
How did your tutors react to your work?

Sue. They looked at my work only in terms of form not content. They seemed almost embarrassed by the political and personal content of my work. They see art as a private activity and the only recognition they understand is in terms of the art market: placing far too much emphasis on originality and encouraging the students to compete rather than to share ideas.

So you needed the response of the people who have come to see your work?

Sue. Yes, but I don't want to go on working like this, because I'm aware when friends come to see my work that a separation could develop between us if I continue to make objects while they come to see them.

I'm more interested in working with women friends that I feel emotionally involved with than with people who have been trained as artists. I don't see creativity as separate from anything else. I think I could learn a lot from children; their play, fantasies and creativity which is just part of their lives and very much to do with relating to their friends.



'This piece is a fantasy, an escape perhaps into the future. It's a dream world connected with childhood dreams, peace and happiness. It is very tiring to be involved in simply showing my oppression (illustrated by my other piece, the wendy house). Fighting stereotypes often leaves us with little sense of our own identity. Art as an activity has helped me to create an identity and to externalise for other women what is in my head.'

Women are Secret Artists

Plans are well underway for the WOMEN'S WORK exhibition (Spare Rib issue no. 12) but as yet no date has been fixed. The organisers describe the aims and ideas behind the show which promises to bring all women's work out into the open.

Too many women are 'secret' artists, reluctant to show the products of their work because it is, in many cases, largely functional, seen as an accessory to everyday living. WOMEN'S WORK is to be an exhibition of extraordinary and special objects, events, artworks, baked works, music, dances, words, films, documentation (scrapbooks, journals, research projects, albums) - in short anything which a woman may consider something to be looked at, or participated in, for the sake of its aesthetic as well as its purely practical relevance to her own life and the lives of others.

Work done with love

A basic function of this show is the re-evaluation of women's work and the eradication of accepted categories which create the different intellectual stratas apparent in art. We want to exhibit the products of women's creativity covering the wide range of works by professional and committed women artists; by women who are developing traditional handicrafts such as pottery, carpet-making, tapestry and other home-making activities; and by women who are making

unclassifiable 'things'. We suggest that there is a continuity of intent and feeling in all the work done with love by women and we want all women to have a chance to see if this is so, to see their work in a new context. We make no rules as to what is and what is not acceptable as art. We want to see women's creativity acknowledged — by themselves and by men. Women's diffidence about their own work is something we wish to see overcome.

An open show

We are inviting all women who are producing work which they feel is extraordinary, exciting, wonderful in its visual properties to submit to an open show — one in which we hope to see films and events shown and performed alongside exhibits of objects, paintings and other works, all by women.

Out of artistic purdah

Why women? Simply because the opportunities for professional women artists to show their work are rare and the temptation for all women to judge their own often very different work by masculine commercial standards is usually sufficiently discouraging to prevent that work being seen outside the context of the home. While it has always been recognised as man's proper role to strive to go beyond everyday existence into the expression and interpretation of it, beyond functional production to the creation of objects designed to be seen as well as used, women's work is rarely looked at in this light. It is time for women to come out of their artistic purdah and share the products of their creativity with others. We expected the exhibition WOMEN'S WORK to be, at the very least, an experience from which all women (and men) can learn something about themselves and the nature of creativity.

Organising Committee:

Helen Dracup Marilyn Halford Susan Hiller

Signe Lie Carla Liss Christina Toren

If you are interested in participating in "Women's Work" please send a s.a.e. to "Women's Work" 11 Ascham Street, London NW5. Entry forms and further details will be forwarded as soon as they become available.

'Woman power'

The description of the exhibition 'Woman Power' at Swiss Cottage (issue no 12) failed to mention that there are five artists in the group. Apologies to Roslyn Smythe who not only exhibited but read her poems at the meeting held to discuss the show.



High Priestess Beverley Skinner

FEMINIST FOLLIES



A woman's theatre group is responsible for one of the most successful cabaret/reviews in Holland today. Since their first show in 1970 the group has been performing "Women, Women, Women", and their subsequent production "Say It With Women", to capacity audiences in theatres, colleges, highschoools and art centres throughout the country.

The group was founded by Natascha Emanuels. She decided upon the idea during the 1970 women's march in New York. At the time she was playing the pregnant girl in "Hair", and she returned home to begin work on "Women, Women, Women" which received rave reviews from even right wing critics.

It seemed inconceivable to me that Women's Liberation could be a theme to fill Dutch theatres, even given the lively state of the Women's Movement in Holland. But meeting Natascha during her recent visit to London at least partially explained the groups success; she surprisingly combines a tough theatrical professionalism and with a determination to spread the message.

She explained the groups technique: "we started off a little mild intending to become tougher with later shows."

In her view it is the only realistic way of reaching women throughout Holland rather than appealing to an already converted minority in Amsterdam.

The group refers to their technique as "theatre of suggestion". They neither offer direct criticism of women's lives, nor do they dictate solutions. "Who are we", says Natascha, "to offer solutions." Instead they depict women's lives in consciousness raising colours so that when the curtain goes down they'll hear at least one person saying, "that's exactly how it is."

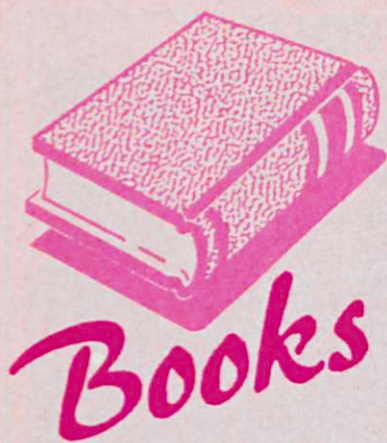
Central to the show's success is the relationship between the

members of the group. From the writers to the technicians they are all women. They were tired of being a 'nice touch' in a male show, and they wanted to demonstrate that, freed from the traditional male theatre hierarchy, they could work well together.

In order to work together they believe that they have to thoroughly understand each other. "Before we can do anything we must know exactly what we are as women — what our individual capacities are." Together they attend weekends on the coast organized by the Women's Movement. And already they are starting workshops for the new show which opens in January. Slowly they build up numbers; improvising on material from their own lives and from collected newspaper cuttings.

With their third cabaret/revue they are turning their attention to men, satirising, sometimes sympathetically and sometimes aggressively, the man's role in a woman/man relationship. Consequently, male writers are to be admitted to the group. "I believe that we must eventually do things together with men," says Natascha. However, until the golden age of mutual co-operation arrives, man is represented on stage by a male doll. Working with the doll the group starts with a number which highlights the split between behavior inside and outside the home and family.

The show, to be called "And Woman Chooses a GentleMan", opens on January 25 at the Tinkel-Tangel Theatre in Amsterdam. We hope that a reader in Holland will send us a review.



The Summer before the Dark

Doris Lessing

Jonathan Cape £1.95

The first twenty-odd years are spent growing up. For the average woman, the next quarter century is spent as a mother. She is loved, loving, needed. Suddenly she arrives at a crisis. Her family is shrinking.

One can barely imagine that any aspect of humanity can have escaped being explored, explained, distilled somewhere in the great works of literature. Yet Doris Lessing's novel, 'The Summer Before the Dark', stands almost alone on the bookshelf in devoting itself to this time-honoured problem: the mother who no longer has 'children'.

Kate Brown is not an extraordinary mother. She could be yours, or mine. She finds herself one summer living through 'A shortened, heightened time' in which - what happens? 'Nothing more than, simply, she grew old.'

In terms of literature, Kate is born of Virginia Woolf's Mrs Ramsay ('To The Lighthouse'), who, 'Her hair grey, her cheek sunk, still bore about with her, she could not help knowing it, the torch of her beauty'. Mrs Ramsay dies suddenly, half way through the novel. And, Virginia Woolf, I cried, how could you cut her off there? Anna Karenina too, just as she approaches the severest trials of womanhood, snuffs herself out, like a candle, under a train. Mrs Wilcox, not unlike Kate Brown, ('year after year, summer and winter, bride and mother, she had been the same'), dies one third way through E.M. Forster's 'Howards End'. Even in his 'A Passage to India', Mrs Moore, 'had come to that state where the horror of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time,' is discarded, enigmatic, within 'a cable to the effect that his mother's dead, poor old soul'.

Doris Lessing has picked up the pieces. She writes quietly, as Woolf and Austen have done before her. Previously she has written, with brilliance but in anger, of apartheid ('Going Home'), of insanity ('Briefing for a Descent Into Hell'), of the shameful lot of women ('The Golden Notebook'). 'The Summer Before the Dark', written gently, calmly, takes the sane and sound and familiar mother, Kate Brown, through a hiatus in her life, through a madness worthy of Kafka or Dostoyevsky. 'The grey band bisected her head from mid-scalp to

forehead. And there it was going to stay: 'Oh no,' Kate heard herself muttering, as she looked at the grey, encouraging it to grow fast, to spread, to banish the dye with the truth, 'oh no, not again, never again, I must have been mad'.

But mad? A woman who could be your mother, my mother, mad? How? Why? "A woman stood on her back step, arms folded, waiting." Her husband is shortly off to the States on a long conference, taking her daughter with him. The two eldest boys are going travelling, but not Tim - for whom Kate will, of course, keep the home running all summer. Her husband and his guest join her on the lawn for coffee. She is not listening to them. She is examining her home, rather like someone saying goodbye. Then it becomes clear that they want her to listen, they are making a demand. The guest works for an organisation in urgent need of a translator of Portuguese. Kate is half Portuguese and bi-lingual. But of course she can't. For one thing there's Tim. But Tim has changed his mind: he is going to Norway. In a flash it is settled. They can let the house for the summer. "Kate said nothing, but she was smiling agreement. She knew she might burst into tears. She felt... as if suddenly a very cold wind had started to blow, straight towards her, from the future... She was unnecessary."

The organisation pays her handsomely, promotes her and sends her off to look after a conference in Turkey. The pay buys Kate flattering clothes; she dyes her hair, not the usual reddish tint, but the glorious dark-red of her youth. To her surprise, Kate rediscovers her attraction. Sitting well, she makes a signal; sagging and slumped, she is ignored. She is startled by the ease with which she can turn on and off attention.

In Turkey Kate excels; is loved, needed. She barely has time to yearn for her home, her family - what family? No: it is "Dear Kate. Chère Catherine. Sweet Katya, Katinka and Kitty... I shall miss you, Mrs Brown." The conference in Turkey is over. Where next? A young American, Jeffrey, takes her on a day trip. "She ought to go straight back to England, ask for a room in a friend's house... in a friend's house she would be occupied again, every minute of her time, helping and nannying - and sit quietly and let the cold wind blow as hard as it would." Instead, she goes to Spain with Jeffrey.

But Jeffrey falls ill; the affair is quickly curtailed. Kate struggles against mothering him, finally falls ill herself and, deserting him, returns to a hotel in England. There she suffers - perhaps simply with "a sickness of the will" - loses much weight and emerges, haggard, a grey band bisecting her dark-red hair, on to the streets of London. Her closest friend does not recognise her. Kate 'was elated, as if she had been set free of something.' But she is also mad, crazed - perhaps just ill, very ill - but demented, delirious, strange. The difference her looks make to people fills her with rage. "She would have liked to blow snot in their faces or pee, publicly, like a cow in front of them... There, look at that, I'm here, can't you see?"

Kate rents a room with a young girl,

Maureen. Her own family return home from their travels but Kate does not. As she comes to know Maureen, Kate reels away from treating her like a daughter. "I'm not going to be saddled with the responsibility for you breaking up with Philip," she says angrily. "Why does it have to be your responsibility?" Maureen screams. "I'm not going to be like you - it's my responsibility, saying no. I'm not going to be like my mother. You're maniacs. You're mad." "Yes," says Kate. "I know it. And so you won't be. The best of luck to you. And what are you going to be instead?"

For what Kate Brown is going through is no strange, unheard of insanity. It is, however accentuated, however condensed, every woman's madness. It will be Maureen's madness.

All this time, Kate has been dreaming a continuing-story dream. In it, she is carrying a heavy seal, which is half-dead from dehydration, northwards towards the sea. Kate's dream worries her. She hopes the seal will not die. And then, dreaming one night at Maureen's flat, Kate reaches the sea. The seal recovers. It swims away. It does not need her now.

Doris Lessing does not let the deal die. She does not let Kate die. Unlike Woolf and Forster and Tolstoy before her, Lessing takes Kate Brown through to the end of the nightmare, to the sea. The following day Kate picks up her suitcase, "let herself unobserved out of the flat, and made her way to the bus stop and so home."

Veronica-Jane Birley

Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology

June Singer

Gollancz £4.50

'Jungian psychology is all about the seeing of a single experience as an aspect of totality, and a seeing of one's self as a part of the whole, and the whole of one's self as the synthesis of many parts.'

June Singer set out to write a clear, simple book about Jung, explaining how his theories are applied in analytic practice. She has succeeded admirably. By drawing upon case histories of her own patients, and comments from her students, she has unravelled many complexities in Jungian theory and made certain central ideas absolutely clear. The archetypes, complexes, individuation process, the anima and animus, persona and shadow, and the relation between the analyst and client are some of these ideas.

Three topics particularly interested me: anima and animus (or feminine and masculine qualities), dreams and neurosis.

Unlike many Jungian analysts, Dr. Singer does not advise women to affirm and act out totally feminine roles such as mother, helper and muse. She writes that the man must become "aware of the potentiality for those 'feminine qualities' of warmth, receptivity, patience, and openness to the other, within himself. If he could

realize these elements and learn to exercise them without having to feel less of a man, he would find himself more sensitive to woman and to her need to exercise those qualities of her own which resemble his cherished 'masculinity'. These include activity, decisiveness, logical thinking and determination."

Within each individual are varying abilities and attitudes to the world: for each individual to become whole, those parts of the psyche that have been made to take an inferior role should be brought into consciousness and allowed to play an equal part in the individual's life. Dr. Singer's view of women differs from traditional Jungian theory in another important aspect. She considers that the unconscious is not only known fleetingly in our dreams: the body itself is part of the unconscious and the psyche is manifested in every body cell. So it is not enough to develop the logical, decisive parts of our potential: we must also know our bodies, their needs, and take account of them. The clearest example is pre-menstrual tension and menstrual discomfort: if we try to force ourselves to function at top pace when the body is saying 'no', then the body will, as it were, take its revenge and rebel, crippling our ability to push on.

According to Jungian thinking, the dream is seen as an image of the dreamer's unconscious psychic situation, expressed in symbolic terms that can be unravelled to reveal an underlying meaning. Jung, because of his belief in the collective aspect of the psyche and thus of individual dreams, departed from Freud's purely personal approach to dreams, which insisted that the dream is a façade behind which the meaning lies hidden - 'a meaning already known but maliciously, so to speak, withheld from consciousness.' Jung also came to distrust the emphasis on wish fulfillment and the sexual aspect of the unconscious which Freud placed on dreams. Dr. Singer takes the view that the dream really means what it says. 'The unconscious presents a point of view which enlarges, completes, or compensates the conscious attitude. Through the dream it supplies the missing elements of which the ego is unaware, thus exercising its function of striving toward wholeness.' She proceeds in analysis by widening the range of associations to the dream material itself, in order to bring related material to them from myth and fantasy and thus illuminate the dream symbolism. She insists that the analyst's interpretation of dream meanings is invalid unless the client agrees: the emphasis is on the client's developing ability to carry on the dialogue with the inner aspect, finally without the help of the analyst. It is this which has a therapeutic quality.

As with dreams, so with neuroses. Dr. Singer believes it is insufficient to find the cause of a neurosis, or dream; what is really needed is an understanding that having a neurosis is a way of striving for a goal or purpose. 'In the wider sense, the neurosis, and the dream which carries its message, has, as its purpose, the drive towards individuation. This involves correction of some conscious attitude that prevents the individual from more fully realizing his total capacity. When

normal productive means of achieving one's purpose are blocked off, neurosis develops as an effort to find a way over or around the obstruction.' So a neurosis is an essentially normal mechanism. Once we understand what it is trying to accomplish, we can start to act to achieve what we really want.

Everything June Singer says tends to point back to her central concern with balance of mind and wholeness of personality. Achieving this depends on allowing unconscious materials to come up and interact with consciousness, and also on using both 'masculine' and 'feminine' aspects of the psyche.

Boundaries of the Soul is essential reading for anyone interested in Jungian psychology. More than that: it offers a method for understanding the complexities of everyday mental life.

Carol Morrell



Music and Women in particular...

Well **Cher Bono** (of Sonny and...) has made a new LP, which would be fine, but it doesn't live up to their superhit 'I Got You Babe' even though it was made some years ago, and to my mind they've made nothing like it since - either singly or together. Still, you may well enjoy 'Bittersweet White Light' (MCA) there's a Jolson medley and a couple of Gershwin songs on the album; she's probably a great success as a cabaret artist. But I can't help thinking that her voice is wasted, continually set against an overpowering barrage of orchestration and dull arrangements.

Carole King has written some sensitive lyrics to her songs on 'Fantasy' (A&M), it's pleasant and easy listening, though not as imaginative as her 'Tapestry' LP. She is indisputably talented, but sadly, no particular song stands out, the tracks, with Bacharach style backing, just flow into each other.

Now if the Beatles had never existed, **Fanny** would be okay, but the Beatles did exist, and agreed, they'd influence anybody but it's a shame Fanny are still under their influence musically. It's a tough enough task for an all female band to succeed anyway, without allowing critics a chance to make that kind of comparison as well. The news not so long ago of their banned Palladium appearance because the management considered their dresses too sexy, stinks of having to follow the well trodden path of selling more than musical ability. Fanny are talented, their LP 'Mothers Pride' (Reprise) which was released earlier

this year shows them to have great potential - if somewhat lacking in guts as a rock band. Most of the songs are written by Nickey Barclay the keyboards player, the words don't say anything new, but remember, women in rock music have hardly had a chance to develop as yet.

Another female group - **Bitch** - were quoted in the music press recently as saying 'Most of the time we have to be much better than men to be accepted as a female band, largely because there are very few female bands around. Women have been sat upon and pushed back for so many centuries, they're just starting to emerge as musicians'.

Dory Previn is known for many reasons, but more important than being the cause of Spare Rib's temporary disappearance from Smiths' last month, and much more important than being Andre Previn's ex-wife, she is a very capable musician, singer and songwriter. The LP 'Mary C Brown and the Hollywood Sign' (United Artists) is the first time I've heard her, though in fact there's a long list of film lyrics for which she's responsible, plus several albums. Her songs are elemental, with a welcome absence of complex techniques. This LP is like a lucky dip with a prize every time, all her words are relevant and perceptive, listen to 'Don't put him down' it's so true, it hurts. Furthermore, how cheering to find a woman coordinating production, Norma has got to be a woman's name - hasn't it?

Diana Ross recently released a single entitled 'Touch Me in the Morning'; (Tamla Motown) an LP is due of the same name. In September, she tours Britain with her sho-be-do

girls and twenty five piece orchestra. It's hardly surprising, if you now confuse her with Billie Holliday, (after all the film publicity and timely stream of record releases). You might simplify the situation and learn a less glamourised version of her life by reading a copy of 'Lady Sings the Blues' by Billie Holliday and William Duffy (Barrie & Jenkins £2.95).

Rita Coolidge has such a warm, seasoned voice, and on her LP 'The Lady's Not For Sale' (A&M) there's some beautiful blues, 'Everybody Loves a Winner' is a stylish example. There's 'Fever', Leonard Cohen's 'Bird on a Wire' and Dylan's 'I'll Be Your Baby Tonight' too. The backing is just right, it blends in with her voice to produce a peaceful, relaxing sound.

Millie Small, who sang the 1964 hit 'My Boy Lollipop' (Island) which sold over four million copies and was number one in Nigeria for two solid years, has been found after much searching, in Malaysia; she is returning to resume her recording career.

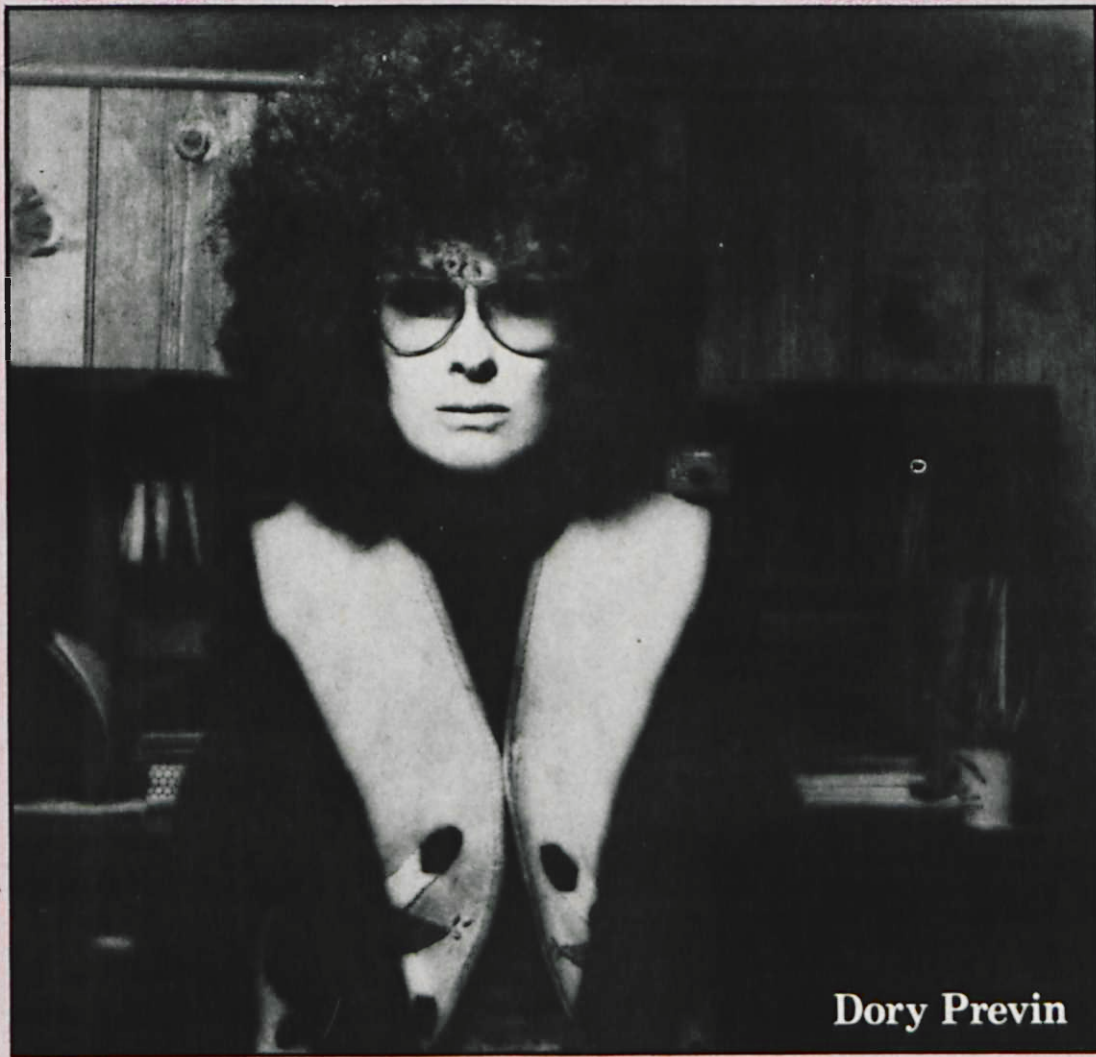
Some patient soul should spend time with journalist/actress/singer **Polly Perkins** before she's throttled. Her LP 'Liberated Woman (Chapter One)' has a signed warning on the cover stating that liberation for women means, amongst other things, 'children left to get on with their own scenes and women fancying other women' add to that, trivial credit comments and over thirty minutes of pub music and then start hoping that the blind will stop leading the blind.

A lady who's been singing for a long time both in a duo and as part of a band is now solo for the first time. Her name is **Carolanne Pegg**, she plays fiddle, guitar, and writes her

own magic folk lore songs. If you're interested in the progress of folk music, her LP is called 'Carolanne' (Transatlantic) of which she says, 'It's the most important thing I've ever done, because everything that makes me what I am comes out in the record - there's my interest in tradition, the broken marriage, the occult, my daughter Clancy, all these things just seem to have come together on the record'. 'Raw But Tender'. An apt title for **Jaki Whitren's** first LP release on CBS. For a white singer of nineteen, she's gifted with a voice that's got soul and maturity, a combination of Joan Armatrading, Jose Feliciano and Joni Mitchell. She writes songs about her life and feelings and plays guitar reminiscent of Bert Jansch with some beautiful finger picking. Session men provide the final touches of colour to a very impressive album.

Linda Lewis is another singer/songwriter and guitarist. She's had a successful single 'Rock-a-Doodle-Do' and also completed her part in a new cartoon film loosely based on Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Mikado' and 'HMS Pinafore'. The title of her LP 'Lark' (Reprise) captures the quality of her child-like vocal style which flutters the whole time on top notes. For the most part, she sings light soulful love songs, 'Lark', the title track is noteworthy, so is 'It's the Frame' which is just her and her guitar. It's encouraging to see so many women who are musicians, singers and songwriters, finally gaining the recognition they deserve.

Marion Fudger

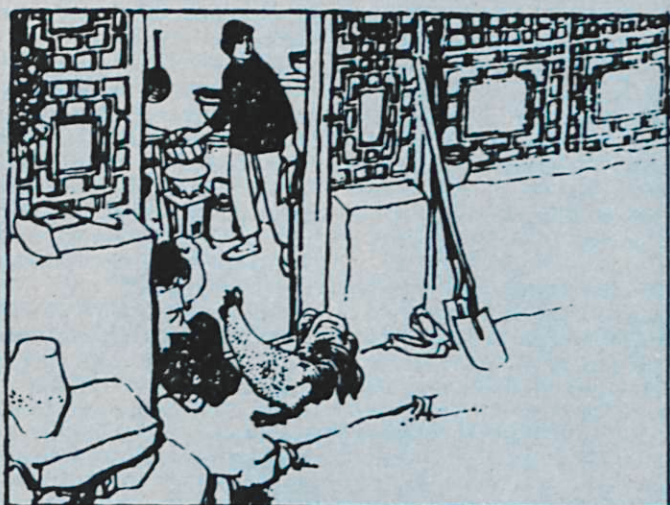


Dory Previn

LI SHUANGSHUANG



14. Xiwang quickly lay down again and turned his face to the wall. Shuangshuang took no notice of him but handed Xiao Ju a cold steamed bread roll and told her to go outside.



15. Next she raked out the stove and looked into the cooking pot. There was no water in it and she said angrily, "When you came home, why didn't you rake out the stove and put on the water and get a move on! . . ."



18. The more Shuangshuang listened, the more impatient she became. Stamping her foot, she slapped the knife down on the table and said, "Eat it, you won't like it!"



19. While Shuangshuang angrily sat on the sill wiping the tears from her eyes, Xiwang began to feel better and picking up the already sliced noodles said, "This is enough for me. I'll cook it myself."



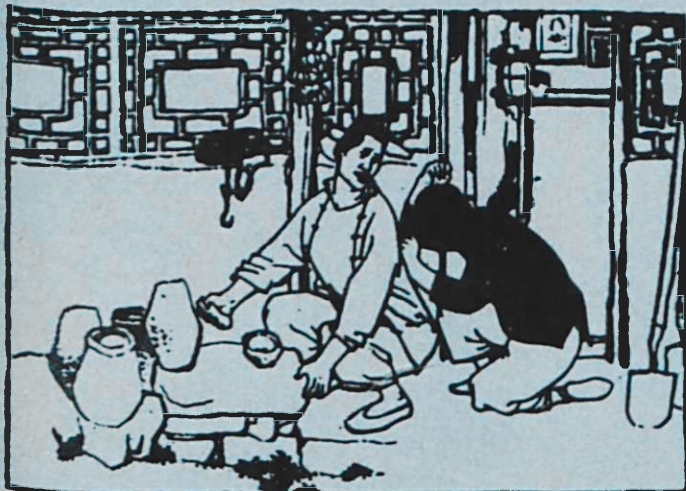
22. At mention of going to see the Party secretary, Xiwang knew that he would come off worse, so he quickly broke free and leaped out through the gateway, turning to shout, "Let's go. You follow me; I'll go first!" and then he dashed off back to work.



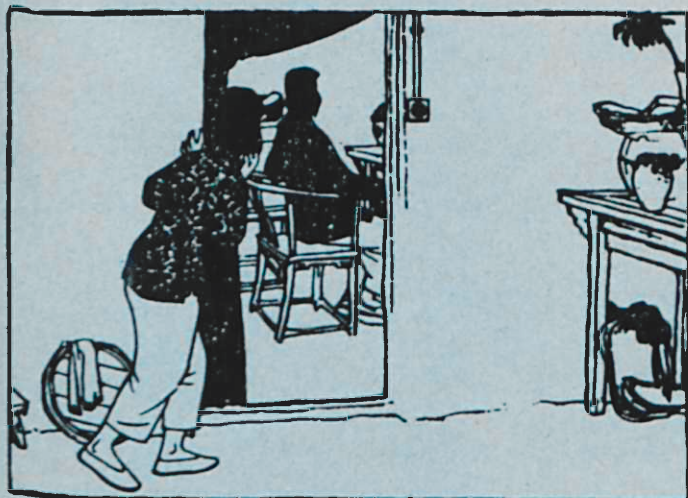
23. By evening Xiwang had not returned home. After eating supper, Shuangshuang put the child to bed and sat alone by the window, sewing the sole of a shoe. She was thinking about her argument with Xiwang and also about why the production spirit of the women was so low.



16. Xiwang abruptly sat up. "I can't accept this tyranny. If I start cooking for you, next thing I'll be washing your underpants!" Shuangshuang was furious. "You don't seem to be doing much while here I am as busy as anything; haven't you got eyes in your head?"



20. He took two cloves of garlic and began to pound them with a mortar. The more Shuangshuang cried, the louder Xiwang pounded, and then Shuangshuang became really angry. She jumped up and began pummeling Xiwang on his back with her two fists.



24. Suddenly there was a slight cough at the door and somebody walked in. Shuangshuang, thinking it was Xiwang, did not turn to look, but it was in fact the wife of the team leader, You Fang.



17. So saying, Shuangshuang began slicing the noodles. Xiwang jumped off the kang and said, "That's your own fault! You're an activist, but who gives you anything for that?"



21. "Right, you are rebelling against your husband," muttered Xiwang and he took off one of his shoes to beat her; but Shuangshuang grabbed him by his wrist and said, "Let's go. We'll ask the Party branch secretary to adjudicate!"



25. You Fang's wife knew that the two of them had been arguing and said persuasively, "Call it a day! There's a proverb: 'A young couple bears no malice after an argument, for by day they eat from the same pot and at night they share the same pillow!'" Shuangshuang couldn't help smiling. "But we can't even eat together!"

More next month. See P. 47

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